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# STORIES FROM ENGLISH HISTORY

FROM B.C. 55 TO 1485 A.D.

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## THE STORY OF ANCIENT BRITAIN.

### 1 THE LANDING OF CÆSAR.

1. One day in August, many hundreds of years ago, some unknown ships were seen coming across the sea towards the south-east corner of this island.

2. The men on the beach watched them closely. As they drew nearer, the rays of the sun flashed on the helmets and swords of armed men. The ships were full of soldiers.

3. "See, yonder comes the enemy!" the watchers may have cried. "It is the great chief of whom we have heard. He is coming with his mighty men to conquer our country, and to make our sons and daughters slaves. We must fight for our lives and homes!"

4. The news of the coming of the enemy soon spread along the coast. Crowds of warriors flocked together to defend their island home. When the ships had nearly reached the land, the

soldiers on board them saw, stretching along the shore, a great throng of wild, half-naked men.



The Landing of the Romans

5 It was not easy for the strangers to land. Their ships were large, and could not come very

close to the beach. The soldiers were not used to the sea, and were not eager to fight the waves before they could reach land and fight the men.

6. But at length a brave standard-bearer in one of the ships raised his standard aloft. Pointing to the figure of an eagle which crowned it, he cried: "Soldiers, follow me, unless you wish to give up your eagle to the enemy! I at any rate will do my duty to my general and my country."

7. So saying, he leaped boldly into the sea, with the standard in his hand. Ashamed of their fear, all the soldiers sprang after him, and dashed through the water towards the land.

8. The brave men on shore rushed out to meet them, hurling stones and darts. Many a hard blow was struck, many a man was wounded and slain. But the strangers were the better soldiers, and after a hard struggle they stood on dry land, and drove the enemy in flight before them

## 2 BRITAIN AND THE BRITONS.

1. The strangers who had thus gained a footing upon the island were Romans. They were the finest soldiers in the world, and conquered wherever they went. Their general was Julius Cæsar, one of the greatest soldiers that ever lived.

2. Cæsar had for many years been fighting in

Gaul, the country which we now call France. The men of Gaul fought bravely, and Cæsar found out that they were sometimes helped by friendly warriors from this island.

3. So, when he had conquered Gaul, Cæsar made



up his mind to cross the sea and conquer the men of the island also. He wanted to prevent them helping the Gauls any more.

4. He also wanted to see what the island was

like. He had heard strange tales of its beauty and wealth, and he wished to see for himself if they were true.



Britons making a Boat of Basket-work.

5 What he saw he has told us himself, in a book which he wrote about his wars.

6 The island, he tells us, was called Britain,



and the people Britons. They were much like the people of Gaul,—tall, strong, with blue eyes and long light hair. Those who lived near the sea grew corn, and carried on trade with Gaul. Those who lived inland were more savage, fed on milk and flesh, and had only the skins of beasts for their dress.

7 They were brave in battle, and in war time painted their bodies blue in order to frighten their enemies. They used war-chariots, which they drove with furious speed into the enemy's ranks.

8 They had no towns with streets of well-built houses, but lived in mud huts scattered here and there. The dress even of the richest of them was poor and rough, though their chiefs sometimes wore ornaments of gold.

9 Such were the people who lived in this island two thousand years ago, and who faced the Romans so bravely at the coast.

### 3. CÆSAR'S SECOND COMING.

1 When the Britons found that they were helpless against the Romans, they begged Cæsar to make peace. This he was willing to do.

2 But a great storm arose, and the Roman ships, which had been left on the beach, were lifted by the waves and dashed upon the rocks.

Many of them were hopelessly ruined, and some other ships, which were bringing Cæsar's horse-soldiers from Gaul, were forced by the storm to put back.

3 The Britons saw what damage the storm had done, and they were glad of it. Cæsar's army was not very large, and he had lost some of his ships. If only his soldiers could be kept on the island, and be prevented from getting food during the winter months, the Britons thought that they might destroy their enemy after all.

4. But Cæsar was too great a general to let his army be destroyed in this way. He ordered the ships that were most damaged to be broken up, and with their wood the holes in other ships were mended.

5 Corn for food was got in from the harvest-fields of the Britons, and the Romans made, around their camp, a rampart and a ditch, behind which they were safe from attack.

6 But when the storms had ceased, Cæsar thought it best to return to Gaul, for he could not hope to crush the Britons with his little army. After one more terrible battle, in which the Romans were victors, Cæsar burned down many of the dwellings of the Britons, and then left the island.

7. Next year he came back with a larger army,

which landed without having to fight. For the Britons, remembering their first defeat, had fled into one of the dark forests which covered the country. There they made a stronghold, from which they made, from time to time, sudden rushes on the enemy.

8 Cæsar then marched inland, and crossed the Thames with his troops, fighting hard all the way. The Romans soon captured the stronghold of the British chief Caswallon, who then gave up the struggle, and promised to pay tribute to the victors.

9. Cæsar had now done all that he had meant to do. He had shown the Britons how helpless they were against the power of Rome. There was no longer any fear that they would help the Gauls, and the great Roman general left Britain for ever.

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#### 4. CARADOC.

1 For nearly a hundred years after Cæsar went away from Britain, the Romans left the island alone. Then the Roman Emperor Claudius, wishing to make Britain a real part of his empire, sent a general to conquer it.

2 The Britons, as before, stoutly defended themselves, but they were no match for the well-trained Roman soldiers. Some of their tribes

even went over to the side of the enemy, and helped to defeat their own brethren.

3. In a fierce battle, one of the British chiefs was killed. Caradoc, the bravest of them all, was forced to flee into the country that is now called Wales, and the Roman general seized upon his lands.

4. Caradoc was not only brave. he was also skilled in the art of war. He withdrew with a vast horde of Britons into the hills of Wales, where he knew every step of the ground.

5 When the Roman general led his army after him, Caradoc



Roman Soldiers.

chose a position upon a steep hill. He threw up a wall of huge stones for a defence, and he was also protected by a deep river which ran between him and the Romans.

6 At the approach of the enemy, Caradoc and other chiefs rushed from rank to rank, cheering their men with brave words. On came the Romans, to be met with thick showers of darts and stones.

7 Still they pressed on. They were armed with helmet, breastplate, and shield, which saved them many a wound, and their spears and swords were of the finest make.

8 The Britons had no armour, and their weapons were not equal to those of the Romans. They were not so well trained, and though they fought with desperate courage, they suffered a terrible defeat.

9. Caradoc escaped, and fled to his step-mother in the north, while his wife and daughter were taken prisoners. But he was not long free, for his step-mother, wishing to win favour with the Romans, gave the brave chief up to them.

10. When the Roman general returned to his own country, he took Caradoc and his family with him among his prisoners. All Rome flocked to see the general ride in triumph through the streets.

11. First in the long line of prisoners came slaves whom Caradoc had conquered in war. Then came men bearing chains of gold and rich treasures which he had taken from other British tribes. His wife and daughter, and his brothers followed next; and last of all came Caradoc himself with bold fearless look.

12. "I had men and horses, arms and wealth," he said, when he stood before the Roman emperor;

“I might have been your friend instead of your captive. My fall and your triumph will ever be famous; so now, if you save my life, the fame of your mercy will never die.”

13 Struck by the courage of the chief, the emperor pardoned him and all his family. Their chains were struck off, and it is said that Caradoc remained in Rome, and received many favours at the emperor's hands.

#### 5. BOADICEA.

1 For more than ten years after the capture of Caradoc, the Romans could do no more than hold their own in Britain. Then dreadful things happened which ended sadly for the Britons.

2. One of the British kings had arranged that, at his death, his kingdom should be divided equally between his two daughters and the Roman emperor. In this way he thought to keep his family and his kingdom safe.

3 But when he died, Roman soldiers came and plundered his country. They whipped his wife Boadicea with cruel rods, and ill-treated his two daughters.

4. They took for themselves all that had belonged to him and to his chief men, and carried away his kinsfolk as slaves.

5 The people were shocked and maddened by this conduct, and feared for their own lives and goods. Getting other tribes to join them, they raised a great army to fight against the Romans.

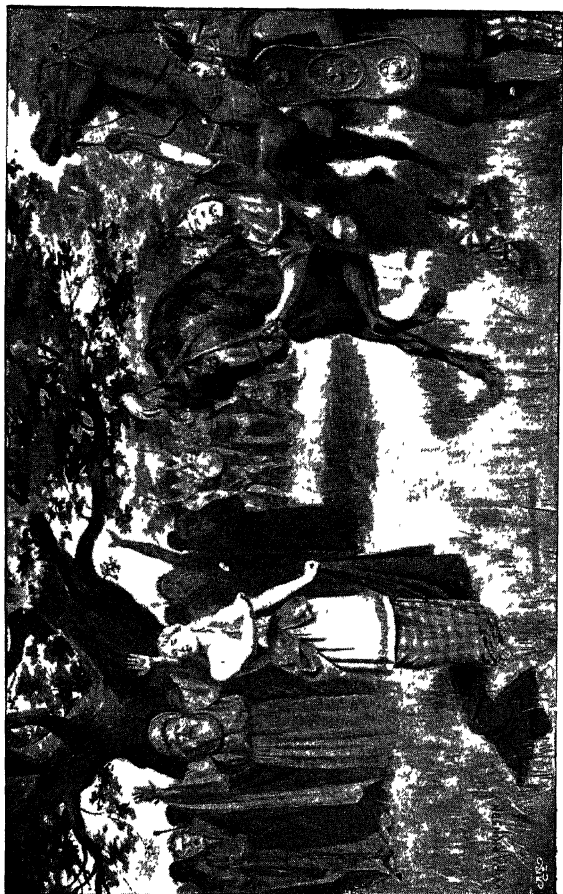
6 One day they fell upon the Romans when they were little expected, and took a terrible revenge, slaying old and young without mercy, and setting fire to houses and temples. The Romans fled to London, which was even then a thriving business town

7 The Britons followed, and the Roman general was forced to leave the town, for the greater part of his army was elsewhere, and the force he had was too small to fight the enemy. Then the Britons burned London, and slew thousands of the people of the city. 6

8 But the Roman general soon collected all his forces, and made ready for a great battle. He placed his army where there was an open plain in front and a forest at their backs. Horse and foot stood firm in close array.

9 Opposite them stood the army of the Britons, a great throng of wild, fierce men, eager for vengeance on their foe.

10 Then Boadicea appeared with her daughters in a war-chariot, and rode up and down the ranks from tribe to tribe. "Britons," she cried, "in this battle I myself will lead you on!



Boadicea shows to her People the Marks of the Roman Rods



11 "The Romans have robbed you of your freedom, look, my body smarts with these wounds they have inflicted, my daughters weep for the injuries they have suffered.

12 "One of the Roman legions has perished, and the rest are afraid. They will run away if you only shout, and will not wait for your blows. Let us fight, then, for in this battle we must conquer or die. This is the mind of a woman; men, if they like, may live and be slaves!"

13. Then the battle began, and with javelin and lance the Romans met the foe. The Britons fought with fury, but they had no chance against their well-trained enemy. The Romans slew even women and beasts of burden, as well as many thousands of the warriors.

14. Boadicea fled, and fearing lest, if she were taken, she should suffer again, she put an end to her life by poison.

## 6 BRITAIN UNDER THE ROMANS

1. The Romans were not soldiers only; they could do a great deal more than fight. They were a great people in many ways, and when they had conquered Britain by force of arms, they turned their attention to the arts of peace.

2. For nearly four hundred years the Romans

held Britain as a part of the Roman empire, and



The First Preaching of Christianity in Britain

during that time the country was greatly changed for the better.

3. Many of the dense forests which grew in various parts of it were cut down. Marshes were drained, and well-built towns were founded where at one time there was nothing but wild underwood or swamp. Fine temples, baths, and public buildings adorned the streets of the towns, in which trade flourished and wealth grew.

4 Great roads were made, running from London into all parts of the country, and passing through forests and over rivers. Mines of tin, lead, and copper were worked, and the metal got from them was sent across the sea to Gaul and Italy.

5. The Romans encouraged the fisheries of the island, and taught the Britons better ways of tilling their fields and growing crops.

6 The rich Romans built themselves splendid villas in the country, paving the floors with coloured tiles, and adorning the rooms with graceful pillars and fine carvings. Remains of Roman houses and pottery are to this day sometimes dug up.

7 The Romans taught the Britons how to make better clothes than those they had been accustomed to wear. Some of the Britons learnt to speak Latin, the language of the Romans, and British soldiers served in the army of the empire.

8 It was during this time that the story of

Christ first became known in Britain. What the religion of the Britons was before this we do not know; but their priests were called Druids, and offered human sacrifices in dim groves of oak.

9. Though the religion of Christ began to be known, there were many savage Britons still in the land who hated the Christian religion, and who would not learn anything at all from the Romans.

## THE BEGINNING OF CHRISTIAN ENGLAND.

### • 1. BRITAIN BECOMES ENGLAND

1. There came a time when the Romans left Britain. Wild tribes were attacking their splendid city Rome, and all the Roman soldiers were needed for its defence.

2. It was a bad day for the Britons when the last Roman soldier went away. For many years the Romans had defended the country from the fierce warriors who attacked it, some of whom came from the part of the island now called Scotland, some from over the sea.

3. When the Britons were left to themselves, they found that they were too weak to keep off their bold enemies. They sent to Rome most pitiful letters asking for help.

4. In one of them they said: "The savages drive

us into the sea, the sea drives us back on to the savages. Our only choice is whether we shall die by the sword, or drown; for we have none to save us."

5. But Rome could not spare soldiers for the defence of Britain. At length, less than a hundred years after the Romans had gone, wild heathen Angles and Saxons from Denmark and North Germany overcame the Britons, and took for themselves some land in the south-east part of the island

6. Step by step they drove the Britons inland, every year new bands poured across the sea to assist them, and by and by they became masters of the country

7. They made their home on the land which they had won, and called it England. Those of the Britons who escaped death or slavery had to seek refuge in the wild country in the west, and their descendants live in Wales and Cornwall to this day.

## 2. THE ENGLISH

1. These heathen people from over the sea, and not the Britons, were the forefathers of the English people of to-day. Let us try to see what they were like, and how they lived.

2 They were tall and strong, with bright blue eyes, and light hair which was allowed to grow long both by men and women. They were farmers and fishermen, and lived together in villages or little townships.

3 They made it a boast that they were free; indeed, the men of different villages kept so much apart that they were like enemies.

4. The greater part of the men were called *churls*, and were freemen, each holding his own portion of land. The chief men, who had earned fame themselves, or whose fathers had been noble, were called *earls*.

5 From these earls were chosen leaders in war and rulers in peace, and these leaders were known as aldermen. But no man enjoyed more rights than any of his fellows.

6 Disputes between the villagers were settled at the "tun-moot", that is, a town meeting at which all the men would attend to give their votes.

7. Matters of more importance were decided at the "shire-moot" or county meeting. Here again every freeman had the right to attend.

8 Laws were made, and the great questions of peace and war were talked about, by the "Witan" or wise men of the people: that is, the earls and other great men; but the people came

to their meetings, and showed by their shouts what they thought of their wise men's speeches.

9 These meetings were not held in a hall, but beneath some spreading tree, or upon some grassy hill-top.

10. The people had at first not one king, but many. There were at one time at least seven great kingdoms in England, though at last one of the kings, Egbert of Wessex, was looked upon as chief or master-king by the rest.

11. The love of freedom which these Old English felt is still felt by their descendants, and it has helped to make England the great country she is.

### 3. THE COMING OF AUGUSTINE

1 There is a pretty story which connects Britain, now called England, again with Rome, which was at that time the chief Christian city of Europe.

2 One day a young Roman priest named Gregory was passing through the market-place of Rome. Among the slaves who were huddled together there, waiting to be bought, were some pretty boys whose fair hair and ruddy faces were strange to the dark Roman.

3 "Who are they?" he asked of one who was standing by.

“They are Angles,” was the answer; “Angles from England over the sea.”



Gregory and the little English Slaves

4. “Not Angles, but angels,” he said, touching their fair locks kindly. “And do they come from England?”



"Yes, from heathen Deira, the kingdom of King Ella, there."

"Then shall they be saved from the wrath of God,"<sup>1</sup> said Gregory, "and Alleluia shall be sung in the land of Ella."

5 Many years after, when the young priest had become Pope Gregory the Great, he remembered the boys in the market-place, and what he had said about them, and how he had longed to go and teach them. He wished to change the English from heathens to Christians, but he could not now go to England himself, as he had meant to do.

6. At the head of one of the convents in Rome was a monk named Augustine, and he was chosen by Gregory to go to England. With him he took forty monks, and they landed in the Isle of Thanet, in Kent.

7 Now the English were pagans, and worshipped many gods, chief of whom was Woden,<sup>2</sup> the god of war, the father of slaughter, the giver of victory. They believed that heroes, when they died, went to a heaven where the days were spent in fighting and the nights in feasting.

8 They offered up animals as sacrifices to their gods. Sometimes they killed their slaves and

<sup>1</sup> *De ira* means in Latin "from the wrath"

<sup>2</sup> His name forms part of *Wednesday*, the day of Woden.

even their children upon their altars. Their religion was one of cruelty, not of love.



Queen Bertha reading to King Ethelbert

9 But Ethelbert, the king of Kent, had married a Christian lady, Bertha, daughter of the king of Paris. He had also met and talked with wise

men of other lands, who were not so rough as the English in their ways of life.

10 He had learnt from them and from his wife many things he would not otherwise have known, and he was a good and wise king.

11. When Augustine landed and sent word to the king that he had come to speak of Christ, Ethelbert received him kindly. With his wife he sat among his people in the open air to receive the teachers.

12 The rough English must have wondered as the monks came slowly along, chanting solemn hymns, and bearing aloft a great silver cross, and a banner painted with the figure of Jesus.

13 Ethelbert listened with attention to what Augustine had to say. "Fair are your words," he said, when the monks had finished, "but also new and strange. I may not forsake the gods of my father, but as for my people, they may believe whatsoever they will, and no man shall hinder them."

14 He allowed Augustine to make his home in Canterbury, where he held services in Bertha's church. There the monks lived a simple life, preaching to all who would hear, caring nothing for riches, and depending for their daily food upon the kindness of those they taught.

15 In course of time, their good example led

many to believe what they taught, and by and by King Ethelbert was baptized, and thousands of his people with him.

#### 4 CÆDMON, THE OLD ENGLISH SINGER.

1 It was long before all England became Christian. The country was ruled, not by one king, but by many, and all were not so good and wise as Ethelbert. But at length the old gods were given up throughout the country.

2. One of the pagan kings who became Christians was Edwin, who ruled over the north part of the country.

3. He was kind to Christian teachers, and, after his death, a grand-niece of his, named Hilda, founded a home for monks and nuns at Whitby. It stood on a high cliff, the broad sea below it on one side, the woody valley of the river Esk on the other.

4 Here men and women lived pure and earnest lives. They read and studied, they shared all their goods in common; they called Hilda 'mother', and looked up to her as one far higher and holier than themselves.

5. She taught and cared for the poor ignorant people round about, and they learnt the stories of the Bible in song and poem.

6 How the first of these poems was made is told us in an old story

7 Among the men who came to the monastery to work and to be taught was one of middle age named Cædmon. At night the servants and others would meet in the hall, and pass the time pleasantly in singing songs of brave deeds of old, to the music of the harp.

8. But Cædmon knew no songs. When, as he sat with the rest, his turn came to sing, and he saw the harp coming towards him, he would rise from the table in shame, and go home sad and lonely

9 Yet he felt in his heart that he would like to sing, not of battles and heroes, but of the wonderful things that he had learnt from the Lady Hilda.

10 One night he had gone out from the feast to the stables. Some of the guests had come from far, and their beasts must be guarded against robbers. It was Cædmon's turn to watch them, and as he sat among them, sad because he had no gift of song, he fell asleep

11. In his sleep he had a wondrous dream. One stood by him and called him by name. "Cædmon," he said, "sing me something."

"I cannot sing," the poor man replied; "indeed, I have come out hither from the feast because I could not sing."

12. "But you shall sing to me," said the stranger. "What," asked Cædmon, "ought I to sing?"



Cædmon repeating his poem to the Abbess Hilda

"Sing of the beginning of all things," was the answer, "sing of the Creation of the World."

Then Cædmon began to sing words which came to his lips he knew not how.

13. In the morning, remembering part of what he had sung in his dream, he went to one of the servants of the house, and told him about it. He was taken to Hilda, who said, when she had heard his poem, that his new power was the gift of God.

14 She told him a Bible story, and when he came next day with the story turned into verse, she asked him to become a monk, and to give up the rest of his life to making poems.

15. So he went to live in the monastery, where he was taught the sacred stories, and turned them into song. There he lived to a great age, and died at last peacefully in his sleep. He was a good and humble man, of whom all were fond.

## THE STORY OF ALFRED THE GREAT.

### 1. ALFRED THE BOY

1 The greatest of the kings who ruled over England in early times was Alfred, and about him many stories are told.

2. Alfred was the youngest and favourite son of King Ethelwolf, who was in many ways a good king. He had been brought up in a monastery,

and all his life thought much of learning and religion. Alfred's mother died when he was four years old.

3 When Alfred was seven, Ethelwolf went on a visit to Rome, taking the boy with him. Along with the king went many of his chief men, and the people of the countries through which they passed, wondered at the splendour and wealth of the English king.

4 When they came to Rome, Ethelwolf gave rich presents to the Pope. One was a golden crown, another was a sword, the hilt of which was made of gold. Other presents were vessels of gold and silver, and dresses beautifully made and richly adorned. The king also gave away much money in Rome, and the people of Rome were loud in his praises.

5 Little Alfred must have enjoyed his visit. As he saw the splendid buildings in Rome, the temples, the theatres, the circus, the statues; as he walked where Cæsar had walked, and stood where Caradoc had bowed before the Emperor Claudius, his mind must have been filled with new thoughts and wishes.

6 Perhaps he said to himself: "Oh! if I were a king, I would do my best to make my country as great and as beautiful as this beautiful Rome."

7 They stayed in Rome a year, and then set



out for home. On the way back through France, Ethelwolf married Judith, the young daughter of the French king, whose beauty he had admired when he saw her on his former journey. She was only seven years older than Alfred.

8 Judith was very kind to her young stepson. When they were back in England, she read to him the stories and poems of which he grew so fond. The boy was bright and thoughtful, and he used to look with delight and longing at the books from which Judith read.

9. They were not printed, but were written by hand. Monks spent long days in forming shapely letters, and in making the books beautiful with pictures and ornaments, wonderful in form and splendid in colour.

10. One day, when Judith had been reading to Alfred and his elder brothers, she promised to give the book to the boy who first learnt to read. The bigger boys thought little of this, but Alfred set to work, and very soon won the book for his own.

11. In those days few people could read, and hardly anyone could write. Only the monks and their pupils learnt to read.

12. The greatest men in the land could not write their names, but made a cross upon papers which they wished to sign. So Alfred's brothers

were not to be blamed because they loved games better than reading.



Alfred receives his Book

13. Alfred loved games too. He grew up a strong, handsome youth, fond of sports and hunting, as well as of reading and study. He

became also a brave and skilful soldier, and a favourite with all people, high and low. 2

## 2. ALFRED THE WARRIOR

1 After Ethelwolf's death, three of his sons became king in turn. The third of these was Ethelred, and it was in his reign that Alfred showed what he could do in war.

2 For many years England had been troubled, as Britain had been, by the attacks of fierce warriors from over the sea. These were the Danes, or Northmen, who were very much like what the English had once been. They were bold and daring in fight on sea and land, and believed in the same gods that the heathen English had once worshipped.

3 At first they would come in the summer, rob the English of whatever they could, and return to their own countries for the winter. But becoming bolder, they at last began to remain in the island, to enjoy what they had won by their fighting.

4 They settled in Kent, and in the eastern counties, and from their settlements they used to attack and plunder the English.

5 The English kings tried to drive them out, and won many battles against them. But as

fast as one band was defeated, another would land and come to its help. It was just as impossible to keep them out, as it had been for the Britons to keep the English out years before.

6 In Ethelred's time the Danes had won a great part of the country, and had formed a strong camp where the town of Reading now is. It was near this camp that a great battle was fought, in which Alfred showed his bravery and skill.

7 The English army came in sight of the Danes at the close of a spring day. All things were got ready for the battle, and then the two armies went to their tents for the night.

8 Early in the morning Alfred, who had charge of one part of the English army, went out to set his men in order. But Ethelred refused to leave his tent until the priests had performed the service of the church.

9 The Danes made the first attack, and Alfred was hard pressed on a little hill where he had placed his men. Long and fierce was the fight around a thorn tree that stood alone at the top of the hill. At last Ethelred came to help his brother. His men fought well and bravely, and the Danes were overpowered, and put to flight.

10. Not long after this victory, another battle was fought at Merton, in Surrey. This time

the Danes were the victors, and Ethelred was wounded in the battle. After lying ill for some months he died, and Alfred, who was now twenty-two years old, became king.

11 He was king, not of all England, but of Wessex, the country of the West Saxons, which took in all the southern part of the country from the Bristol Channel to the border of Sussex. But the king of Wessex was looked up to as their head by the other kings.

12 Alfred was crowned king at Winchester, then and long after the capital, and at once had to fight hard for his kingdom against the Danes.

### 3. ALFRED IN MISFORTUNE

1 A great battle was fought between the English and the Danes at Wilton. Neither side could claim the victory, but the slaughter was so great that even the Danes were glad to make peace. Very soon the peace was broken.

2 The Danes came suddenly upon the Castle of Wareham and the city of Exeter, and captured them. Other Danes came across the sea to help their friends.

3. Alfred built a fleet of ships to fight them on the sea, and his ships were sometimes able to drive the enemy back. In spite of this, the



King Alfred allows the Cakes to Burn

Danes were so strong, and came into Wessex in such swarms, that the English lost all hope of ever getting rid of them.

4. Many Englishmen fled to France, and Alfred himself at last had to go into hiding at Athelney, a spot among the swamps of Somerset. Stories say that he lived for some time in the hut of a cow-herd, where he spent his time in making plans for freeing his country from the hated Danes.

5 One day he was sitting by the fire, thinking deeply, and mending his bow. The cow-herd's wife had put some loaves to bake, and then attended to other things. By and by there arose a smell of burning, and the woman came quickly to the fire, and found that the loaves were burning black.

6 She took them up and turned angrily to the man who sat there, not knowing that he was the king. "You man!" she cried, "you will not turn the bread you see burning, but you will be very glad to eat it when it is done." <sup>a</sup>

7. The king bore her scolding with patience, and afterwards took care to tend her bread as she wished.

8 By and by some of Alfred's noblemen found out where their king was, and came to him. With their aid he turned the swampy place

into a strong camp, and with them he talked over his plans.

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## 4 ALFRED IN RETIREMENT.

1 One winter day, when food had run short, and Alfred's companions had gone out with their bows and arrows to hunt for more, a poor beggar came to the door. He asked the cow-herd's wife for bread, but there was only a small loaf in the hut.

2 Alfred looked up from the book he was reading, thought for a moment, and then bade the woman give half the loaf to the beggar. He said that the same Power which once fed five thousand men with five loaves and two small fishes, would also provide food for him and his men.

3 Then he returned to his reading, and, being weary, he fell asleep. He dreamed that an angel appeared to him and told him that God was pleased with his kindness, and would soon bring him back to his kingdom, and give him greater power than before. In token of this, his companions would return that night from hunting with a plentiful supply of food.

4 Alfred awoke full of hope and courage. By and by his men returned laden with game and fish. He told them of his dream, and they



were all full of joy at the thought that things were changing for the better.

5 An event now happened which raised their hopes still higher. The Danes, after fighting in Wales, came across the Bristol Channel and laid siege to the castle of Kenwith, in Devonshire. The commander of the castle, one of Alfred's noblemen, planned a night attack upon the enemy, so as to take them by surprise.

6 One dark night he got his men together, and just before the dawn they rushed out of the castle, and came upon the Danes sleeping in their tents. In the darkness the Danes were thrown into confusion, and did not know their friends from their foes.

7 They were out-matched, and when they learnt that their leader had been killed, and their banner taken, they fled in despair to their ships. Twelve hundred dead bodies were left upon the ground.

8 When Alfred heard of this victory, he made up his mind that now was the time to go out against the Danes. So he sent messengers into all parts of the country, asking for soldiers to come and join him.

9 The people were delighted to hear of their king again, for they had begun to think that he must be dead. Soldiers from all parts flocked

to his standard, and very soon he was at the head of a large army.

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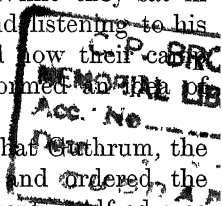
### 5 ALFRED CONQUERS THE DANES. 2

1. The main body of the Danes had made their camp on a hill at Edington, in Wiltshire. Alfred wished to know exactly how large their army was, and what was their position on the hill.

2 He might have sent one of his own men to the Danish camp as a spy. Instead of doing so, he dressed himself like one of the strolling harpers who used to follow an army from place to place, singing songs for the amusement of the soldiers, and in this disguise he went to the Danes.

3 Alfred's memory was stored with old songs, and he was a skilful player on the harp, so that he was well received by the Danish soldiers when he offered to sing to them. While they sat in groups, drinking their mead and listening to his music, Alfred carefully noticed how their camp was placed on the hill, and formed an idea of the numbers of the enemy.

4 His playing was so good that Guthrum, the Danish general, heard of it, and ordered the harper to be brought to his tent. Alfred was in great danger of being found out, but he was careful of his actions, and, after playing for some



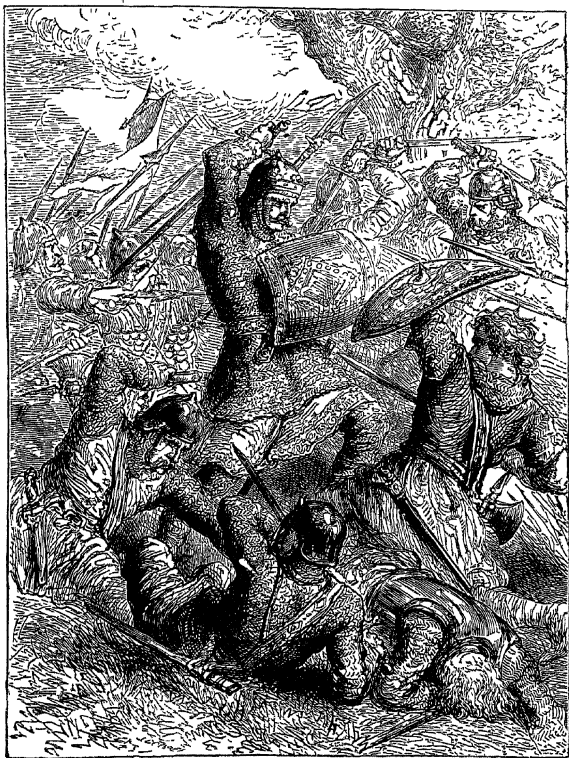
time to Guthrum, he left the camp in safety. He had learnt all that he wished to know, and returned to Athelney with a plan of attack in his mind.

5 He arranged that his men were to meet on the border of Selwood Forest. They came together as secretly as possible, but as they grew in numbers they became bold, and the forest was soon filled with the blare of trumpets, the clash of arms, and the shouts of the soldiers.

6 The Danes heard the din, and Guthrum drew up his army in readiness for battle. Alfred's troops marched boldly to meet them. They began the fight at a distance with arrows, then at closer quarters they used their lances, and very soon it became a desperate fight with swords and axes, hand to hand, and man to man.

7 Terrible was the slaughter, and for long no man could tell which side would win. At last the Danes gave way, and began to retreat. Hundreds had been killed, many were taken prisoners, and those who escaped took refuge in a castle.

8 For fourteen days they were shut up there, not daring to come out and fight. Food and water got less and less, and at last, fearing that they would starve, Guthrum opened the gates to King Alfred.



Battle of Edington

9. Then Alfred showed the nobleness and the wisdom of a great king. He saw that it was impossible to keep the Danes out of England,

so he agreed to allow Guthrum to rule over the eastern part of the island if he would promise to leave Alfred's kingdom of Wessex, and never return, and if he would become a Christian.

10 Guthrum was glad to agree to these very merciful terms. He came to see Alfred, and became his guest for some weeks, and was baptized as a Christian under the name of Ethelstane.

11 Then English and Danes joined together in feasts and rejoicings, and by and by, when Guthrum went to his kingdom, he took with him many fine presents from Alfred.

#### 6 ALFRED THE KING.

1 Great as King Alfred was in war, he was still greater in peace. No king before him, and few kings after him, did more for the real happiness and welfare of the people.

2 He drew up a book of laws for the protection of life and property. Men who did wrong were severely punished, but no man was put to death for his crime. Alfred took care that the judges should be fair and upright men, for any who acted unjustly were heavily punished.

3 Respect for Alfred's law was so great, that people said if apples of gold grew beside the

public highway, a man might walk the country from end to end and not dare to steal them.

4 Alfred showed great favour to religious men and men of learning. He wished all his people to learn to read. He was himself anxious to learn all that he could, and invited a learned bishop named Asser to leave his home in Wales, and come to live with him and be his teacher.

5 Asser taught Alfred many things, and among them, the Latin language. When Alfred had learned Latin, he set about translating Latin books into English for the use of his people. He made a translation of a History of the World, and of a History of the English Church written by a good and learned monk named Bede. To the first of these he added two stories of travel, which were told him by the travellers themselves. Thus he tried to give his people knowledge and fresh ideas.

6 In his reign, too, there was begun the Saxon Chronicle. This was the story of England from Cæsar's invasion to Alfred's own day. Monks wrote in it, year by year, the principal events in the history of the country.

7 After Alfred's death, the Chronicle continued to be written for nearly three hundred years, and from it we get nearly all our knowledge of the early history of our country.

## 7. ALFRED'S LAST YEARS

1 Alfred is said to have invented a clever way of telling the time, for there were no clocks or watches then. He noticed how evenly the candles, used in his palace and in the churches, burnt down, and he found out by careful trial the size of a candle which would burn exactly three inches in an hour.

2 Then he ordered a large number of these candles to be made, each of them one foot long. They were marked off in inches, so that each inch of candle lasted twenty minutes, and each candle lasted four hours.

3 By taking care that such candles were always kept burning, he made it possible to know exactly how the time was going. This was a great help for those who had work to do.

4. In those days the windows, even in castles and palaces, were often mere holes in the walls, for glass was then not used in England. On a rough day, the wind, sweeping in through these holes, blew the candle flames about, and made the candles burn faster than they were meant to do.

5 Alfred set his wits to work to prevent this. He knew that horn, when softened with hot water, could be cut into very thin plates, through which light would easily pass.

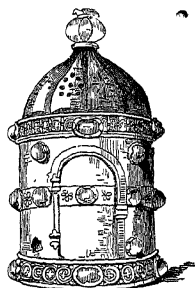
6 So he set some thin strips of horn into the sides of a wooden box, and thus made a rough lantern, in which his candle-clocks would burn steadily.

7. Now that he could exactly measure time, Alfred is said to have divided his day into three parts of eight hours each. One he gave to sleep and food and exercise, another to the business of the country, and the third to religion and study and the care of Church matters.

8. This great king is sometimes called the Founder of the British Navy. For he spent great pains in building ships, which, as we have seen, were able to drive away the ships of the Danes.

9 Alfred's last years were disturbed by more troubles with the Danes. Under a fierce leader named Hasting, fresh bands of the Northmen poured into the country. For several years Alfred fought them on sea and land, and at length was able to drive them out.

10 Only four years afterwards, the great king's useful life came to a peaceful end: As he lay on his deathbed, he called to him his son Edward,



Saxon Lantern



a young man who had many of his father's fine qualities.

11 "Thou, my dear son," said the dying king, "set thee now beside me, and I will deliver to thee true counsel. I feel that my last hour is nigh. My strength is gone from me, my countenance is wasted and wan. My days are almost come to an end, and it is time for us to part.

12. "I go to another world, and thou art to be left alone to hold all that which I have held to this time. I pray thee, my dear child, to be a father to thy people. Be the children's father and the widow's friend.

13. "Comfort the poor, protect and shelter the weak, and, with all thy might, right that which is wrong. Then shall the Lord love thee, and God himself shall be thy great reward "

14 So King Alfred passed away. He was fifty-two years old. His body was buried in the cathedral at Winchester, and his kingdom passed peacefully to his son.

15 Alfred's people loved and admired him he was so calm and patient, so earnest and sincere, so eager to please them and to do them good, and so careless of his own pleasure. Alfred the Truth-teller they called him; afterwards he was known as Alfred the Great.

## THE DANES IN ENGLAND.

## 1 THE DANISH CONQUEST

1. For more than a hundred years after the death of Alfred the Great, the English kings had to fight hard against fresh bands of Danes. First Alfred's son Edward, then his grandson Athelstan, led their armies against the invaders, and showed themselves to be able warriors, as they were also good kings.

2 Athelstan won a splendid victory over a large force of Danes and Scots, in which five Danish kings and seven earls were among the slain. But, in course of time, there came to the throne kings who were neither so brave nor so wise as King Alfred and his family. The most foolish of these was Ethelred, who became known as the King of Ill-counsel

3 It was in a very shameful way that he became king. His half-brother Edward was king, but his mother wished Ethelred, her other son, to reign.

4 One day Edward was out riding in the country, and, becoming very thirsty, he called at the house of his step-mother, and asked for something to drink. She came to the door herself, bringing a cup of wine which Edward took from her hand, still sitting on his horse.

5 While he was drinking, one of his step-mother's servants came behind him, and stabbed him in the back. Edward put his horse to the gallop, but soon became faint from the loss of blood, and fell from the saddle. His foot stuck in the stirrup, and he was dragged along the ground by his startled horse until he died.

6 Ethelred then became king, and the reign thus badly begun went on badly. Danes came in large numbers over the sea; they sailed up the Humber, slaying and robbing, they even came up the Thames and threatened London.

7 The foolish king paid them a large sum of money to leave England, but they soon returned, and laid waste the country worse than before. Ethelred again gave them money, which he got together by putting a tax upon the people. This tax was known as *Danegeld*, that is, Dane-money.

8. Then there came into Ethelred's mind the terrible thought of killing the Danes who were settled in his kingdom. On St. Brice's day his plan was carried out. The English slew all the Danes upon whom they could lay hands,—men, women, and children. Among those who were killed was the sister of the Danish King Sweyn, who, when he heard the news, swore to take England from Ethelred.

9. For several years the Danes kept up

their attacks on England, destroying churches, burning towns and villages, and slaying without mercy. Then, with one mighty effort, they overcame the last feeble defence of the English, captured Oxford, Winchester, and London, and drove Ethelred in flight over sea to Normandy.

## 2 THE DANISH KINGS

1. Sweyn, the king of Denmark, died only a few weeks after the flight of Ethelred, who then returned to his kingdom. The English king died two years later, and his son, Edmund Ironside, became king.

2. Edmund at once had to fight against Canute, the son of Sweyn. Five great battles were fought, in some of which Edmund was the victor. But at the battle of Ashdown, in Essex, the English were beaten by the Danes, and then the kingdom was divided between Edmund and Canute.

3. Only a few months afterwards Edmund died, and then Canute became sole king of England. Canute was a little man, but as bold and fierce as a lion, and a most able warrior.

4. As a king he showed himself both wise and merciful. He kept the country at peace, and took care that justice was done, in this way earning the love of his people.

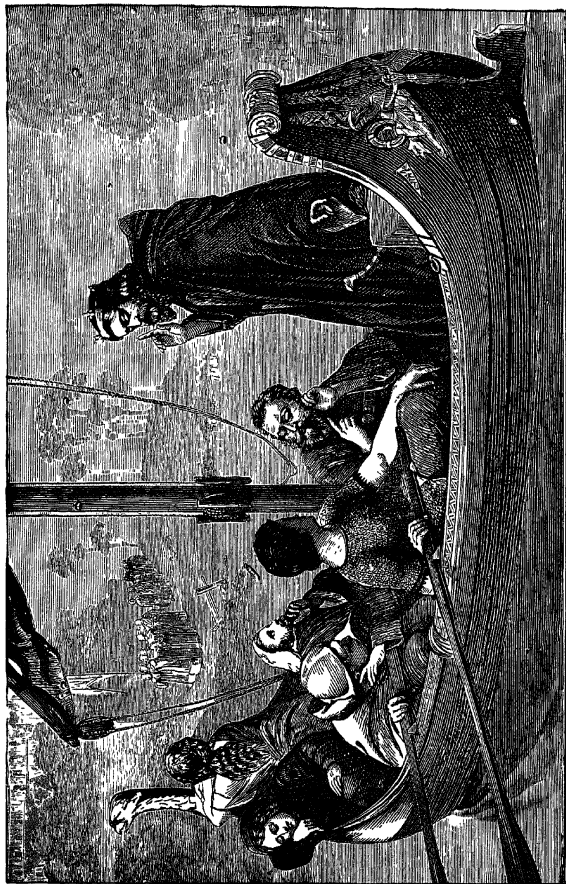
5. He paid great respect to the Church, and once went as a pilgrim to Rome. He gave splendid gifts to churches and religious houses, and was a good friend to the monks.

6. An old story tells how he was going one day by boat to Ely to keep a church festival, and heard the sweet song of the monks as he came near. Then he bade the rowers sing with him, and composed a little song for them to sing—

Merrily sang the monks in Ely,  
As Canute the king rowed by.  
Row, boatmen, near the land,  
And let us hear the monks sing.

7 There is another story, which shows what good sense Canute had. Some of his courtiers used to flatter him, and say that so great was he that even the sea would obey him.

8 One day, when the king was by the sea-shore with his courtiers, the waves came rolling up the sand nearer and nearer to Canute's feet. He sternly bade them go back, and when they still came on, he turned to the lords, saying, "One only is there who can say to the sea, thus far shalt thou come and no farther". And the lords sank their heads in shame, knowing that the king meant God, and that he intended by these words to rebuke them for their senseless flattery.



Canute and the Monks of Ely

9. When Canute died the nation grieved, for he had ruled wisely. His two sons, who reigned after him in turn, were savage, foolish men, in no way fit for their high place.

10. After a reign of two years, the second of them died in a drunken revel at the house of one of his lords. Then the crown passed away from the Danes, and went to Edward, son of Ethelred, a quiet, saintly man, forty-one years of age.

## THE NORMAN CONQUEST.

### 1 HAROLD'S OATH

1 In the hall of a Norman castle, one day, there were met together many noble warriors and proud churchmen. Among the company were two men who seemed to be of more importance than the rest, for all eyes were bent on them.

2 One was a tall, dark man, whose strong frame and stern look marked him out as a leader of men. The other also was tall and big, but his hair was fair and his eyes were blue; and, while his look was proud, there was something of discontent in it.

3 The dark man was William, Duke of Normandy; the fair man was Harold, Earl of Wessex. The former was head of a race of men descended

from fierce Northmen who had made a home for themselves in the north of France. The latter was the most powerful man in England.

4 At this time Harold was William's guest, or rather his prisoner. For, sailing down the English Channel, his vessel had been wrecked on the Norman shore, and William had taken him from the nobleman upon whose land he had been cast.

5 William was glad to get Harold into his power. Both these strong men were aiming at the crown of England, and William had made up his mind to gain Harold's support for himself, by fair means or foul.

6 So he had gathered his chief men together, to hear Harold take an oath to him. In the middle of the hall was what appeared to be a table covered with a velvet cloth. By this Harold stood, and there, lifting up his right hand, he swore a solemn oath that he would be William's man, and help him to become king of England.

7 Instantly the cloth was removed, and Harold saw, not a table, but a chest with a glass top, within which lay holy relics of the Saints. In the belief of the men of that time, Harold's oath was made more solemn by being spoken above these relics.

8 Thus English Harold, though wishing to be king of England himself, was tricked into



promising to help a Norman to be king. How was it possible for either of these men to entertain such a wish?

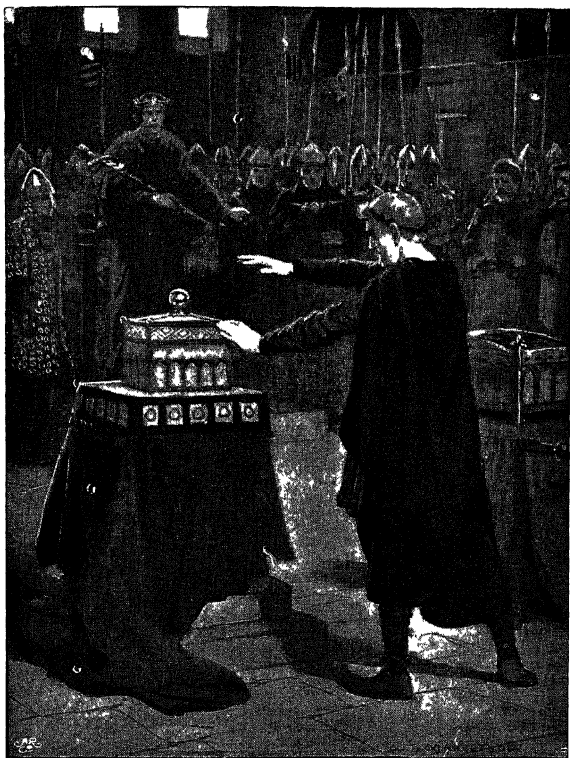
9 The king of England at that time was Edward, the son of Ethelred, known from his pious life as Edward the Confessor. He was a good man, with a fine face and kingly manners, and was beloved by his people for his wise rule and his love of peace.

10 Edward had no children. The heir to the throne was a child, Edgar the Atheling, a grandson of Edmund Ironside. In those stirring times kingdoms needed at their head strong men, and not boys.

11 Earl Harold was a strong man—a brave soldier who had showed some signs of having the qualities of a king. Thus, though he was not of royal blood, he was looked upon by many of the English as the fittest man to succeed Edward.

12 Duke William was also a strong man. From his youth up he had had to fight hard for his dukedom; he had never lost a battle, and was famed as the greatest warrior in Europe.

13 King Edward had passed his childhood in Normandy, and loved the Norman people and their ways. He gathered Normans about him at his English court, and once, when William



Harold takes an Oath of Allegiance

came to visit him in England, Edward is said to have made a sort of promise that William should be king after him.

14 Now it will be seen why Duke William was so glad to get Earl Harold into his power, and why he made him swear so solemn an oath

## 2. THE BATTLE OF HASTINGS.

1 Edward died, and the Council of Wise Men, the great national council of England, chose Harold to be their king. When the news reached Duke William, he was speechless with rage.

2 At once he resolved to win the crown of England by force of arms. First he sent messengers to Harold, demanding that he should keep his oath. But Harold replied that a forced oath was not binding, and that he had been chosen king by the votes of the Wise Men of England.

3 William then set about gathering together a huge army for the conquest of England. He sent word to the Pope how Harold had broken the oath taken so solemnly over holy relics, and asked his leave to punish so wicked a man. The Pope gave his consent, and sent him a banner which he had blessed.

4 William, having got together his army, with much labour built a fleet of ships to carry it to England. Meanwhile Harold was preparing to defend his kingdom.

5 Suddenly news came that an army had invaded the north of England. Tostig, one of Harold's brothers, had been banished from his English earldom because he ill-used his people. He had now returned to take revenge, bringing Harold Hardrada, the fierce king of Norway, to help him in battle

6 Harold of England hurried northward with a small army, met the invaders at Stamford Bridge in Yorkshire, and defeated them in a great battle. Tostig and the King of Norway were both slain.

7 While resting at York, Harold heard that William the Norman had landed on the south coast. Hurrying with all speed southward, collecting forces as he went, Harold came within reach of his enemy a fortnight after the landing.

8 Against the advice of his friends, he decided at once to risk a battle. He drew up his army on the hill of Senlac, a few miles from Hastings, and there awaited the Norman attack.

9 Most of the English were foot-soldiers, armed with huge axes. The Normans were strong in horse-soldiers, and had also some archers.

10 Again and again the Normans fell back before the terrible English battle-axes. William himself was struck from his horse, and a cry arose that he was slain. "I live!" he shouted, tearing

off his helmet so that his men might see his face; "and by God's help will conquer yet!"

11 Presently he drew off part of his troops as if he meant to flee. Harold's eager men, forgetting his order not to stir from their posts, poured down the hill in pursuit. Then the Normans turned round, and, pressing firmly in good order up the hill, smote down the broken ranks of the English.

12 Still a fierce fight was kept up at the top of the hill, where Harold and his faithful body-guard wielded their deadly axes around their banner. William ordered his archers to shoot their arrows in the air, so that they might fall on the bare heads of the English. An arrow pierced Harold's right eye, and, as he tore it out, he was struck to the ground by a Norman knight.\*

13 Over his dead body the fight raged on until not a man of his guards was left alive. Then darkness put an end to the battle. William had won his title of 'the Conqueror', and sat down to eat and drink among the dead.

### 3. COMPLETION OF THE CONQUEST.

1 The Normans won the battle of Hastings because they were better armed and better trained than the English, and because William was a more skilful general than Harold. But



The Battle of Hastings—the Fight round the Standard.  
(M174)

the winning of this one battle did not give William the whole of England as his own

2 At first the English, having no great and trusted leader, made little resistance to the Conqueror, who was crowned king at Westminster on Christmas day. But when he returned to Normandy to look after affairs there, his English subjects rose in rebellion in many parts of the country.

3. If they had joined together under one strong leader, they might perhaps have driven out the Normans. But their chief men were jealous of one another, and the men of the north would not help the men of the south.

4 The men of Kent took arms against the cruel Odo, William's brother, who had been left to guard the kingdom. The men of Yorkshire sought help from the Danes against the Normans.

5 In the south-west, Harold's mother raised a rebellion against William, and the city of Exeter refused to own him as king.

6 When William had settled his business in Normandy, he returned to England and set about finishing his conquest.

7 He put down the men of Kent, then marched to the west, and took Exeter after a siege of nearly three weeks. He showed mercy to the brave defenders, but built a castle to keep them

down in future, and made them pay him large sums of money.

8 Then he marched northwards, and Edwin and Morcar, the northern Earls, gave in to him. But a year afterwards, help came from Denmark, and the north broke out again in rebellion

9 William bribed the Danish leaders to desert the English. Then, in order to punish the rebels so fearfully that they would never dare to rise up again, he laid waste the north of England.

10 Crops and cattle were destroyed, farms and all that belonged to them were burned. Hundreds of men, women, and children lost their homes and died of hunger. Some people kept themselves alive by eating horse-flesh, some even ate the dead bodies of their fellow-men. Others sold themselves as slaves to the Normans.

11. Thus a district which once had been fertile became a dreary waste. For many years afterwards, the unploughed fields and the blackened remains of ruined homesteads told the tale of the Conqueror's cruelty.

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#### 4 HEReward.

1 When William had put down the rebels in the north, almost all England was his. Only in one part of the country was a firm stand still made against him.



2 In the eastern counties there was a swampy district called the Isle of Ely, where a small spot of dry land rose above the rivers and fens which shut it in. On this spot a bold Englishman named Hereward formed his camp.

3 Here for nearly a year a fierce band of Englishmen held out against the Normans. To the Camp of Refuge, as it was called, came many bold and desperate men who would not have the Normans for their masters.

4 They made their home within a monastery, where they kept their weapons hanging from the roof in constant readiness for use.

5 William came up with an army, but at first he could not get within reach of the rebels, because of the water. So he began to build a great causeway of wood and stone, by which he might lead his men over the swamps.

6. Many stories are told of Hereward's deeds—how he went to the Norman camp, once dressed as a potter, another time as a fisherman, to find out all he could about his enemy.

7. At last, some of the monks, wishing to find favour with William, showed him a secret way into the Camp of Refuge. The Normans entered and slew many of the rebels; they also took many prisoners.

8. Even then Hereward was not beaten, for he

escaped to a ship which was kept ready for him close by. He sailed away, but came back at times and made himself a terror to the Normans.



Hereward brought before the Conqueror.

9. At last he was either defeated or he gave himself up to William. Some stories say that he was taken into favour by William, who gave

him lands, and took him to Normandy to help him in his French wars. ✍

#### 5 RESULTS OF THE CONQUEST —(1)

1. William had shown himself strong enough to master the country. he now showed himself wise enough to govern it. In the first place, to prevent all disputes, he said that all the land of England was his, and he gave much of it to his Norman followers.

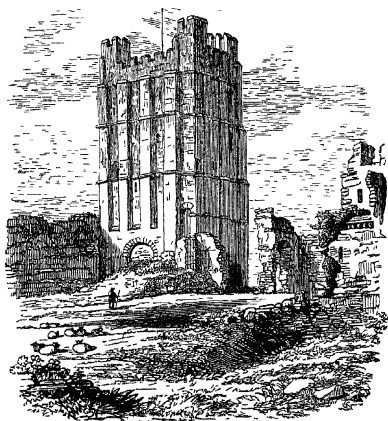
2 To keep down the people, he built many strong castles, such as the Tower of London. In these, soldiers were kept in readiness to put down any attempt at rebellion.

3 In order to make his hold on the Country still more strong and firm, William bound the nation to himself by means of the *feudal system*. This was as follows:—

4. Every man who received land from the king had to do *homage* to him, that is, to swear to be his man and serve him in war with a certain number of soldiers. Such a man was called a *tenant-in-chief*, and the land he held was called his *fee* or *feud*.

5 He might let out his land in portions to tenants of his own, who had to make to him the same promise that he had made to the king

6. Thus in time of war the king would summon his tenants-in-chief, they would summon their tenants, and in this way a large army was brought together. Most of William's tenants-in-chief



Keep of Richmond Castle, Yorkshire

were Normans, upon whom he could depend to obey his call.

7. It was important for William to know all about the land which he had thus got. He therefore sent men into all parts of the country, to find out who the owners had been in the days

of King Edward, who the present owners were, how much their holdings were worth, and what number of cattle and sheep they owned.

8 The answers to these and other questions were written in a book called Domesday Book, or book of judgment, which is still to be seen in the British Museum.

9 This inquiry offended the people, who said it was a shame for the king to set down in the book every yard of land and every cow or pig they owned. But the book was of real value in helping William to govern in an orderly and thorough way.

10. Another act of William's caused great anger and had terrible results. This was the clearing of the New Forest. William was fond of hunting, and marked off several wide districts where stags were kept for his sole pleasure

11 One of these districts was in Hampshire, and was called the New Forest. There people were turned out of their homes, and villages were destroyed, in order that the land might be made into a hunting-ground.

12 Severe laws were made, punishing very heavily any man who hunted in the king's grounds. Thus the king, in seeking his pleasure, caused misery to many people. In the course of time he brought misery on himself too. For, before he

died, a son and a grandson of his both met their deaths in the New Forest, most likely by the hands of angry men who had lost their homes and lands when the forest was enclosed.

18 The Conqueror's son, William the Red,<sup>1</sup> who became king after him, was also murdered in the Forest. People said that these deaths in the Conqueror's family were God's punishment for his cruelty.

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#### 6. RESULTS OF THE CONQUEST—(2)

1. The Norman Conquest brought much distress on Englishmen. The Norman landowners harshly treated those who were under them, and men who had once been free, with land of their own, now became bond-servants on the land of others.

2 But in the end the Conquest was of the greatest benefit to England. Before, the country had not been really united. Parts of it had been ruled by great earls who were almost as powerful as the king, and this was not good for the well-being of the people.

3 When William came, the power of the king greatly increased, and his rule, while hard and stern, was firm and rested on law. This was bound to have good results in time.

<sup>1</sup> Rufus.

4. The coming of the Normans to England had other good results. England had not had much to do with the rest of Europe; and Englishmen, living in their snug little island, thought of nothing but their own concerns.

5. They did not learn the new things that were being learnt by the rest of Europe. They were slow-going, backward in trade, in art, in knowledge, their manners were rough, and their buildings clumsy.

6. When the Normans came, they brought with them improvements in all these things. They knew how to build, they were lively and dashing in manner; they loved art, and were more polite and 'gentlemanly' than the English. In short, they woke up old England, and gave new life to the nation.

7. Although at first they treated the English as a conquered race, the two peoples soon became one. The Norman brightness and charm joined with the English solid strength, to form the mighty race which now covers and governs so great a part of the globe.

8. The Normans spoke a kind of French, and at first the Norman nobles and their English dependents could not understand one another. But by and by French words and forms were taken into the English language.

9. The rough old English speech was much improved by this mixture with the smoother French. The English language thus formed is now the finest language in the world, and is spoken by far more people than speak any other.

## THE STORY OF HENRY THE SECOND.

### 1 HENRY'S TITLE AND CHARACTER

1. Two sons of William the Conqueror were in turn kings of England. The first of them, William the Red, was an able but wicked man, and no one grieved when he was found dead in the New Forest, with an arrow through his heart.

2 The second of them, Henry I., was also an able man, and he pleased the English far more than his father and brother had done. He tried to deal justly and kindly with the English, and to make all men obey the law, great nobles as well as poor people.

3. When he died, leaving no son, there broke out a terrible war between his daughter Maud and his nephew Stephen, who both wished to be sovereign. At length, it was agreed that Stephen should be king until his death, and that then Maud's son Henry should rule the country.

4 Henry became King Stephen's adopted son,



and when Stephen died in 1154, the nation gladly accepted the young man, only twenty-one years old, as their king.

5 During Stephen's reign, the country had been in great misery. Stephen himself was a good-humoured and generous man, but, during the long civil war, he had been unable to defend the people from the cruelty of the great lords

6 Knowing that Henry II. was a strong and able man, the nation looked to him to bring them out of their distress. They were not disappointed.

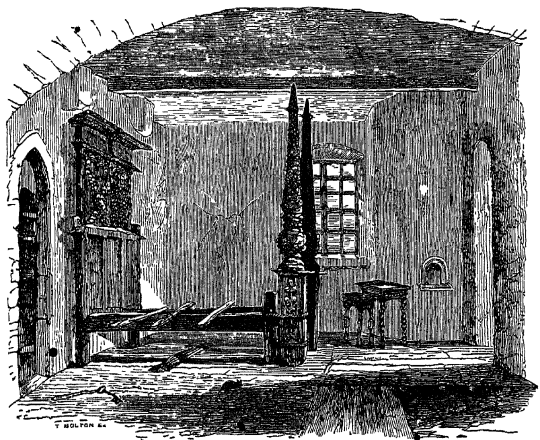
7 Henry's father had been the lord of a large domain in France. Henry's wife Eleanor was the duchess of another French province, and he was himself the Duke of Normandy. Thus the English king was lord of a greater part of France than was the French king himself.

8 Henry was a strongly-built man, with square broad shoulders and thick bull neck. His face was ruddy and freckled, and his hair was red, and cropped short.

9 He had long powerful arms, and hands as rough as any ploughman's. He rode on horseback so much that his legs were somewhat bandy. His voice was harsh and cracked, and when he was angry, his flashing gray eyes made him look terrible.

10 He was a restless and busy man. Indeed,

so hard a worker was he that his servants prayed God to make their master a little more quiet. He dressed plainly, and lived on simple food, and would patiently spend whole days and nights



Queen Maud's Chamber. Arundel Castle

in trying to think out plans by which to govern his people.

11. Though he was a fine soldier and a great general, he was a lover of peace, and showed himself full of pity for the wounded. While he could not speak a word of English, he knew several other languages, and was fond of reading, and of talking with learned and clever men.

12 He had a very hot and fiery temper, and would sometimes roll about on the ground in his rage. Things he had once read, the faces of people he had once seen, rarely slipped from his memory, and he was faithful to his friends and unforgiving to his enemies.

13 He paid great attention to his religious duties, indeed, he was a strange mixture of good and bad

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## 2. HENRY'S WORK FOR ENGLAND.—(1)

1. Henry proved himself to be one of the greatest kings that England has ever had. Early in his reign, he set to work to put down all those lords who brought misery on the people, and who were a trouble to himself.

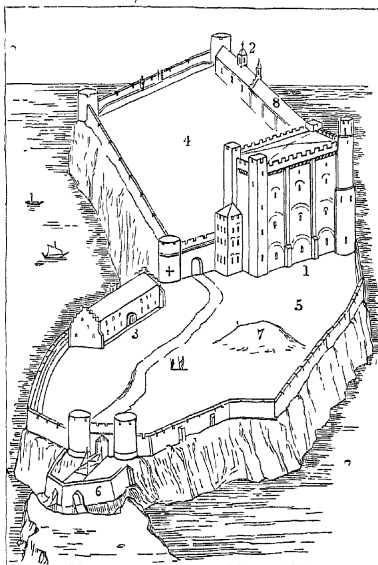
2. These lords had built castles in different parts of the country, where they acted like little kings. The people around were entirely subject to them; they could be imprisoned and put to death at their lord's pleasure, and suffered much in many ways.

3. Many of the lords waged war against one another, so that it became impossible for people to till the ground, and their flocks and herds were always in danger of being stolen.

4. Henry destroyed many of these castles; he made the lords understand that he would have

the laws obeyed, and he took care that his orders were attended to

5. The king himself travelled rapidly through



Norman Castle —From a drawing in Giose's Military Antiquities 1, The Donjon-keep 2, Chapel 3, Stables 4, Inner Ballium 5, Outer Ballium. 6, Barbican 7, Mount, supposed to be the court-hill or tribunal, and also the place where justice was executed 8, Soldiers' Lodgings

the land, to find out exactly how the people lived, and how his officers treated them. He went from place to place so quickly, and took

so little notice of difficulties, that he disgusted his servants and courtiers.

6 Sometimes they would journey to a town where there were not enough houses for them to lodge in, and then had to put up with miserable huts, or even to sleep on the ground. They sometimes had no food but stale fish, sour beer, and the coarsest black bread

7 One of the king's servants wrote: "If the king has proclaimed that he intends to stop late in any place, you may be sure that he will start very early in the morning, and with his sudden haste destroy everyone's plans."

8 "You will see men running about like mad, urging forward their pack-horses, driving their waggons into one another, everything in the utmost disorder."

9 "Whereas, if the king has given out that he will start early in the morning, he will certainly change his mind, and you may be sure he will snore till noon. You will see the pack-horses drooping under their loads, waggons waiting, drivers nodding, tradesmen fretting, all grumbling at one another."

10 As he passed through the country, Henry heard lawsuits, settled cases which people thought the judges had not tried properly, and drew up charters granting rights and favours to towns and traders.

11 He was thoroughly honest and just, and made himself a terror to all false judges and cruel and unruly lords.

### 3 HENRY'S WORK FOR ENGLAND —(2)

1 Henry's great work was the drawing up of a new plan of carrying out the law, which did much for the welfare and freedom of Englishmen. Up to his reign, most of the law business of the country had been done at the *shire-courts*.

2 These were meetings held at certain times, in each county, and were attended by the lords of the county, the sheriff, the clergy, and people from the towns

3 Here, if a man brought a charge against another man, he had to bring witnesses to support it. The accused man had to bring persons who could speak well of him, and very often the question whether he was guilty or not was settled by the votes of the whole meeting.

4 Sometimes he was tried by the method called *Ordeal*. He had to plunge his hand into boiling water, or to walk a certain number of paces holding a red-hot iron. If he received no hurt, he was believed to be innocent.

5 This way of settling disputes was very rough and ready, and often led to further quarrels.

So Henry resolved to make some great changes. There was a King's Court in London, where the work was done by trained lawyers and judges. But few people came to it, for in those days travelling was difficult and cost much money.

6. So Henry sent judges to hold *Assizes* in all parts of the country. The judges went on *circuit*, as it is called, visiting one place after another. They thus took the law to the people, instead of making people come to the law. In this way right was done, and the people knew that they could now have some protection against their lords.

7 The result of this was that the nation began to grow prosperous. The land was till'd, and gave good crops; farms were safely stocked with sheep and cattle; trade grew in the towns.

8. Monasteries sprang up all over the country, and became centres of trade. Round the houses of the monks clustered barns and storehouses. The monks employed men to drain swamps, to turn stagnant water into running streams, to make roads and build mills.

9 In Henry's reign, taxes were first paid to the king in money. In former reigns they had been paid in goods, such as corn, game, fish, eggs, cattle, honey, and beer. The result of the

change was that the coinage became better, and money became more valuable.

10 Knowledge and learning spread. Teachers gathered pupils about them at Oxford and other places, and English scholars went abroad, to France and Italy, to learn law, art, and science.

#### 4 THOMAS BECKET.

1 One of the greatest figures of Henry's reign, the first Englishman since the Conquest who rose to be head of the English Church, was Thomas of London. In those days family surnames were not known, but Thomas is generally called Thomas Becket, after his father Gilbert Becket.

2 He was born in 1118, in the London street called Cheapside. His father was a well-to-do merchant, and rose to be port-reeve, or, as we should say, Lord Mayor of London.

3 Thomas was well brought up. He was taught in London and in Paris, and after serving for a time in a London office, he was taken into the household of Theobald, Archbishop of Canterbury.

4 He soon became a great favourite with the archbishop. Slight and pale, with dark hair, long nose and straight features, he had a merry



face, and a keen mind. He stuttered slightly in his talk, but pleased everyone by his frank and winning conversation.

5 He was soon employed in important business, and received many favours towards the end of Stephen's reign. He became a deacon in the Church, and when Henry came to the throne, the archbishop advised the king to make his favourite Thomas chancellor of the kingdom.

6 Thomas was very learned and clever, and gave the king much help in his great and difficult work. Henry, like everybody else, became very fond of his chancellor. They were always together. They sat together in hall and church, rode out hunting together, fought side by side in battle, and together played many a pleasant game of chess.

7 Thomas lived in splendid style. He dressed in scarlet and furs, and in robes costly with cloth of gold. His household was of enormous size, and he had young nobles of the highest order to wait on him.

8 His tables groaned under the weight of his gold and silver plate, and in the great London shops where cooked foods were sold, it was always Thomas's servants who bought the choicest dishes for their master, and paid the highest prices.

9 Henry delighted to honour his excellent servant. He gave him rich gifts and treated

him as his dearest friend. Sometimes he would come to the great hall where Thomas was dining, and spring over the table and sit down by his side.



Henry gives Becket's Cloak to the Beggar

10 Once as they were riding together through the streets, a poor, ill-clad beggar knelt shivering before them. The king turned to the chancellor, and with a laugh snatched at the handsome cloak

he wore. Thomas resisted, and king and subject had a tussle before Henry succeeded in picking off the cloak, which he then threw to the beggar.

### 5 BECKET QUARRELS WITH HENRY.

1 For several years the king and the chancellor were the best of friends. Then the Archbishop of Canterbury died, and Henry chose Becket to fill his place.

2. Instantly there was coolness between the old friends, for a great change took place in Becket's way of life. He put off his fine clothes and wore sackcloth: the black frock of the monk took the place of the chancellor's fur-lined cloak. His table was still loaded with dainty food, but the poor and not the noble were now his guests.

3. His gay servants were sent away, and his household was formed of forty solemn monks, with whom he spent hours in prayer and study. He visited the sick: every day he washed the feet of thirteen beggars.

4 This change of life offended Henry, who saw that he could no longer depend on Becket doing what he wished. The archbishop put his duty to the Church higher than his duty to the King.

5 The first quarrel was about a land-tax, by

which the king wished to obtain a large sum of money. Becket said that the manner in which this money was to be got was unjust, and Henry, being in the wrong, had to give way.

6. But a greater quarrel was about the church courts. Clergymen who wronged their fellowmen were not tried by the king's judges, but by courts of clergymen. Henry thought that the punishments put upon the clergy by these courts were not severe enough, and wished that all men, whether holding offices in the Church or not, should be tried by the common law of the land.

7. Becket declared that the Church would not give up its rights, and at first the bishops supported him. But when Henry threatened to take away their offices and their lands, they gave way, and Becket was left alone.

8. The bishops and the Pope begged him to let the king have his way, and at length he agreed to do so. Then Henry called a great council at Clarendon in Wiltshire. Here Becket changed his mind, and the king gave way to a furious burst of anger against his old friend.

9. The king's servants broke into the hall where the bishops were sitting, and brandished their axes above their heads. With tears and cries the bishops fell on their knees and besought Becket to give way.

## THE STORY OF HENRY THE SECOND.

10. At last he said, "I am ready to keep the customs of the kingdom". Henry at once ordered these customs to be written down, and the famous *Constitutions of Clarendon* were put together.

11 When Becket was asked to sign and seal this writing, he cried, "While I live I will never set my seal to it". But he appears to have given way at last, though unwillingly.

### 6. THE COUNCIL OF NORTHAMPTON.

1 The Constitutions of Clarendon settled that the clergy should be tried by the common law, but Becket refused to obey them. "I will humble thee," cried the king, "and will restore thee to the place from whence I took thee."

2 A certain John the Marshal made a charge against Becket in the king's court. Becket refused to appear there, and appealed to the Pope, but the king's council sentenced him to pay a fine.

3 Then Henry held a council at Northampton, at which he called on Becket to give an account of certain moneys he had received as chancellor. Becket agreed to pay the king part of the money, but this was refused, and he was allowed a few days in which to submit entirely.

4. The last day of the council came, and the bishops begged of Becket to obey the king. But

the archbishop ordered them to be silent; he put on his robes and said mass, and then set out for the castle where the council was held, only two of his servants riding with him.

5 In his right hand he held his archbishop's cross, and crowds of people thronged about him, weeping, and asking for his blessing, for they believed that that day he should be slain.

6 When the king heard of his coming, he retired with his chief officers to the upper room where he held private council. A messenger was sent to Becket demanding that he should withdraw his appeal to the Pope. He refused, and the barons cried out in anger when the messenger returned with the news.

7 Then the lords passed sentence against Becket, declaring him a traitor, and the Earl of Leicester was sent to pronounce judgment. As the earl entered the hall where the bishops sat, the archbishop sprang up and raised his cross aloft. "By the right of my office I forbid you to pronounce the sentence," he cried.

8 The nobles drew back, and, still holding his cross, Becket said, "I also withdraw, for the hour is past". As he passed proudly down the hall, cries of "traitor!" were raised, and knights and barons followed him almost mad with rage.

9 That night, helped by the darkness and a terrible storm, Becket fled from Northampton, and in a few days escaped to France.<sup>6</sup> When Henry heard the news, for a moment he could scarcely speak for wrath. Then he thundered out, "We have not done with him yet!"

### 7 THE END OF BECKET

1 For six years Becket remained abroad, and the Pope in vain tried to make peace between him and Henry. At length the archbishop found another cause of complaint.

2 Henry wished the kingdom to pass at his death to his eldest son, and in order to ensure that there should be no trouble, he decided to have the boy crowned during his father's lifetime. This was a plan adopted with success by the kings of France.

3 He therefore had his young son, Henry, crowned in Becket's absence by the Archbishop of York. But the right of crowning belonged to the Archbishop of Canterbury, and Becket declared that all who had taken part in the ceremony were cast out of the Church.

4 Henry thought now that it would be wise to make friends with Becket, so he met him in France, and promised that he should return in

safety to England, and that the crowning should be performed over again by himself.

5. But the friendship was not sincere. As soon as Becket returned to England, he again declared that he would punish the bishops, who thereupon fled across the sea to Henry in France. "What a pack of fools and cowards I have nourished in my house," cried the angry king, "that not one of them will avenge me of this one upstart clerk!"

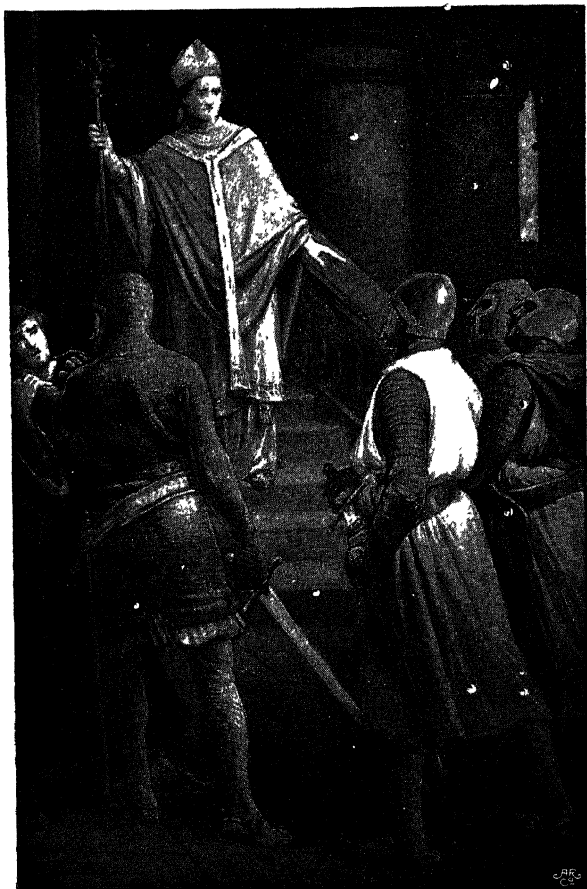
6. Four knights who heard this hasty speech secretly left the court, and crossed with all speed to England. They hurried to Canterbury, and, seeking Becket, they demanded that he should at once submit to the king.

7. When Becket refused with bitter words, the knights withdrew to arm themselves. It was time for evening service, and, putting on his mitre and robes, against the advice of his friends the archbishop went into the cathedral

8. A noise was heard at the doors; they were burst in; and as the knights rushed forward, the monks fled, leaving Becket alone at the head of a flight of steps.

9. One of the knights cried, "Where is the traitor Becket?" "Here!" cried the archbishop, "no traitor, but priest of God!" Another tried to drag him down. "Come," he said, "thou art our





"No traitor, but priest of God!"

prisoner” Becket thrust him headlong down the steps. “Away! Thou art my vassal!” he cried.

10. One faithful monk was wounded in defence of his master. Then the knights fell upon Becket, struck off his mitre, and pierced him with many wounds.

11. Becket fell dead, and as the murderers left the cathedral, a terrible thunderstorm broke over the place.

12. The murder of Becket caused great distress to Henry. For three days he ate nothing; for five weeks he refused to see any visitors. Some years later he visited Canterbury, passed a whole night in prayer before Becket’s tomb, and in the morning asked the monks to whip his bare back, in token of his sorrow for the wicked deed.

13. Becket was looked upon as a martyr, and the people loved and honoured his memory, and went as pilgrims to his tomb.

• • 8 HENRY’S LAST YEARS.

1. Henry II. was the first English king who tried to conquer Ireland. The people of that country, who were of a different race from the English, were ruled by many kings, each at the head of a small kingdom of his own, and the kings were almost constantly at war one with another.

2. Several of these kings joined together, and drove away a king who had offended them. He fled to Henry, did homage to him, and got leave to obtain the help of some English lords and knights, so that he might get back his Irish throne again.

3 By the aid of Richard de Clare, commonly known as Strongbow, and of other knights, the Irish king was restored. Then the English knights fought against the Irish, and also against the Danes who had settled in Ireland, and took much of the land for themselves

4 Henry at last crossed to Ireland himself, in order to prevent his knights from getting beyond his rule and government. He restored order and received homage, but he soon had to leave the country, and then disorder and bloodshed broke out again.

5. Henry was recalled from Ireland by a revolt of his barons. The power of the barons had been much reduced by Henry's wise measures, and they smarted under his iron rule. Numbers of lords, both in England and Normandy, joined together to fight against him.

6 He acted with wonderful energy. The king of France was amazed at the speed with which Henry went about his work. "The King of England", he said, "is now in Ireland, now in

England, now in Normandy: he may rather be said to fly than to go by horse or boat."

7. Henry crushed the rebellion everywhere, but he never again enjoyed rest. His own sons, of whom he was fond, and to whom he had given many lands, rebelled against him.

8 Henry loved his sons too well to fight against them in deadly earnest. He was forgiving, and wished to be at peace with them. Two of them were removed by death, but the two who were left, Richard and John, still troubled their father.

9 At length Richard joined with the king of France in making war on Henry. The English king seemed to have lost his former power; he was old, and weary, and ill, and hardly escaped defeat.

10 Then he had to give way to the demands of the French king. He had to do homage to him for his lands in France, to pay him a large sum of money, and to give up some castles to him.

11 After agreeing with bitter sorrow to all this, he was carried in a litter to his castle at Chinon. There a list was brought to him of those who had rebelled. He ordered his chancellor to read it, and the very first name that he heard was that of John, his youngest and favourite son.

12 "Is it true," the poor king cried, "that John, my very heart, whom I have loved beyond

all my sons, has forsaken me?" Then he lay down and turned his face to the wall. "Now you have said enough," he murmured, "let all the rest go as it will, I care no more for myself and the world."

13. "Shame on a conquered king!" were words constantly on his lips. Then in a few days he died.

## THE CRUSADES AND RICHARD THE FIRST.

### 1 WHAT THE CRUSADES WERE

1. In the year 1094 a small, thin, haggard man might have been seen travelling through France on an ass, and stopping here and there to speak to the people who came about him.

2 His head and feet were bare: his cheeks were hollow and worn with suffering. In his hand he carried a crucifix, which, as he addressed the people, he raised high above his head.

3. Rich and poor came in crowds to hear what he had to say, and as they listened to his stories of dreadful cruelty, they groaned and shed tears.

4. This man was Peter the Hermit, who had gone as a pilgrim to the tomb of Christ in Palestine. He had been cruelly treated, like many other Christian pilgrims, by the Turks, who then were masters of the holy place.

5 In those days people thought that God would be pleased with them, and would forgive them



Peter the Hermit preaching the Crusades

their sins, if they went to Jerusalem to pray at the tomb of Christ. But the Turks were followers

of the prophet Mahomet, and did not believe in Christ, and they did horrible deeds of cruelty to the Christian pilgrims.

6. Now Peter had come to urge Christian people to raise a great army, and fight against these Turks, and rescue the sacred city from them. He preached so powerfully that hundreds and thousands of people were eager to do what he wished.

7 In the next year a great council was held at Clermont, in the south of France. Thousands of people gathered to hear a speech from Pope Urban.

8. The Pope told them that, if they went to fight against the Turks in Palestine, sufferings and torments might be their lot; but though their bodies might suffer, their souls would be saved.

9 "It is the will of God!" shouted the people. "Yes, it is His will," replied the Pope. "You are soldiers of the Cross: wear then on your breasts or on your shoulders the blood-red sign of Him who died for you."

10 This was the beginning of the Crusades, or Wars of the Cross. At different times in the course of two hundred years, nine of these wars were undertaken.

11 Many thousands of people 'took the cross', that is, engaged to go and fight against the Turks.

Large numbers of the Crusaders were sincerely anxious to do this, since they believed it to be a solemn duty. Others joined them simply because they loved fighting, and were eager to make great names for themselves.

12. Serfs were set free by their lords; criminals were let out of prison; debtors escaped from those to whom they owed money, in order to take part in the holy wars.

13. Men who had lived wicked lives took the cross, believing that by fighting the infidels they would earn pardon for their worst sins. Lords sold their lands and ladies gave their jewels, in order to buy arms and horses for the knights and men-at-arms who left their homes for the East.

14. Not one of the Crusades was really successful. Sometimes they failed because of the folly of those who took part in them. Great armies set out for the Holy Land without having taken the least care to provide food for the journey. Thousands of men and women died of starvation.

15. Sometimes they failed through quarrels among their leaders. They all failed in the end. Nevertheless, the Crusaders did take Jerusalem, and it was for a number of years the capital of a Christian kingdom.

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## 2 THE THIRD CRUSADE

1 Richard I. was the first English king who went on a crusade. Richard was a tall, handsome man, thirty-two years old when he became king; very strong and brave, and therefore called Lion-heart, fond of showy dress, and wasteful of money. He was a fine soldier, a good speaker, and a warm-hearted though not a good man.

2 Having raised great sums of money in all kinds of ways, Richard left England only six months after he became king. He was joined by the King of France and other great princes.

3 On arriving in Palestine, Richard, by his wonderful bravery and strength, struck terror into the hearts of his enemies. He took part in the siege of Acre, where Saladin, the great leader of the Turks, was forced to surrender.

4 The King of France then returned home, leaving Richard to advance alone to Jerusalem. The English king came within sight of the sacred city, but had to retire without capturing it.

5 Soon afterwards, hearing of troubles in England, Richard resolved to return to his kingdom. His brother John, whom he had left at home, though not as ruler, was trying to take the kingdom from him, with the aid of the French king.



At the Siege of Acre

6. So Richard made a truce with Saladin, and started on his homeward journey.

## 3 RICHARD'S ADVENTURES AND DEATH

1. Sailing along the coast of Italy, Richard's ship was wrecked, and he resolved to finish his journey overland. He had made enemies on the continent, and knew that the journey would be dangerous; but he thought that in his pilgrim's dress he would be safe.

2. He sent a servant of his, named Baldwin, to the lord of that part of the country, to ask leave for himself and 'Hugh the Merchant' to pass through on their way home from pilgrimage. Baldwin took with him a costly ring as a present to the lord.

3. The lord looked at the ring, and said "This jewel can only come from a king. that king must be Richard of England. Tell him he may come to me in peace."

4. But 'Hugh the Merchant' (as Richard called himself) did not trust the promise, and fled, leaving some of his companions in prison. He went on with one knight and a boy. The boy was sent to buy food at a market near Vienna, and, as he had plenty of money, the merchants were curious to know the name of his master.

5. He was forced to tell it, and then Richard's house was surrounded by a troop of soldiers, who called on the king to come out as their

prisoner. Richard refused to give himself up except to their lord, who happened to be Leopold, Duke of Austria.

6 Now Leopold had been with Richard in the Holy Land, and had become his bitter enemy. He was therefore glad to get Richard into his power. He put him in prison, but soon after sold him to the German Emperor for £60,000. Richard was then kept a prisoner in a strong castle.

7. For a time none of his subjects knew where their king was. At last, as the story says, his prison was discovered by his minstrel Blondel, who wandered all over Europe seeking his master.

8. Singing one day a song of Richard's beneath a small window in a castle wall, the minstrel heard the voice of his master faintly echoing the song from within. Overjoyed at hearing once more the well-known voice, Blondel hastened to England with the good news that he had found the king's prison. A large sum of money was at once raised to buy the king's freedom.

9 Richard returned to England after four years' absence, having spent one year in prison. He now remained in his kingdom only two months, during which, however, he put an end to the disorder caused by the rebellion of his brother John.

10. Richard spent his last years in war with the King of France. In the tenth year of his reign, he heard that a great treasure of gold had been found buried in the earth on an estate in the south of France.

11. As the lord of this estate was a vassal of his, Richard demanded the larger share of the treasure. When this was refused, he besieged a castle belonging to the lord.

12. The castle was strong, and held out stubbornly, though the king threatened to hang every man, woman, and child in it unless it were given up. One day, as he rode round it, an arrow shot from the wall struck him. His doctors were clumsy, and made his wound worse, and he knew that he must die.

13. When the castle was taken, the man who had wounded him was made prisoner, and brought before the dying king. "What have I done to you that you should kill me?" Richard asked. "You have slain my father and my brothers, and taken all that belonged to them," was the reply.

14. Then the generous king forgave the man, and bade his servants let him go in peace. Thus Richard died, and he was buried with his father in a Norman abbey.

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## KING JOHN AND THE GREAT CHARTER.

## 1. SIGNING OF THE CHARTER.

1 On a summer day, in the year 1215, a meadow near Windsor was the scene of an event which Englishmen look back upon as one of the most important events in their history.

2 The chief figure in the scene was a king—a king so bad that no other king of England has borne his name. It was John, the same John whose rebellion broke the heart of his father, Henry II.

3 John had been a bad son and a bad brother before he became a bad king. He had done his best to get the kingdom away from his brother Richard, who had in his noble way forgiven him.

4 He was a mean, false, cruel man. When quite a lad, he had gone to Ireland on behalf of his father to receive the homage of the Irish chiefs, and amused himself there by pulling hairs out of their beards.

5 He was at heart a coward, but played the bully when he had nothing to fear. He was greedy and wasteful, slothful and stubborn, bad-tempered, and guilty of all kinds of wickedness. He actually put to death his own nephew, Arthur, a boy of sixteen, because some of his French subjects wished to have Arthur as their king.

6. And now, on this meadow of Runnymede, after sixteen years of misrule, King John was compelled to set his seal to a charter which made Englishmen for ever free.

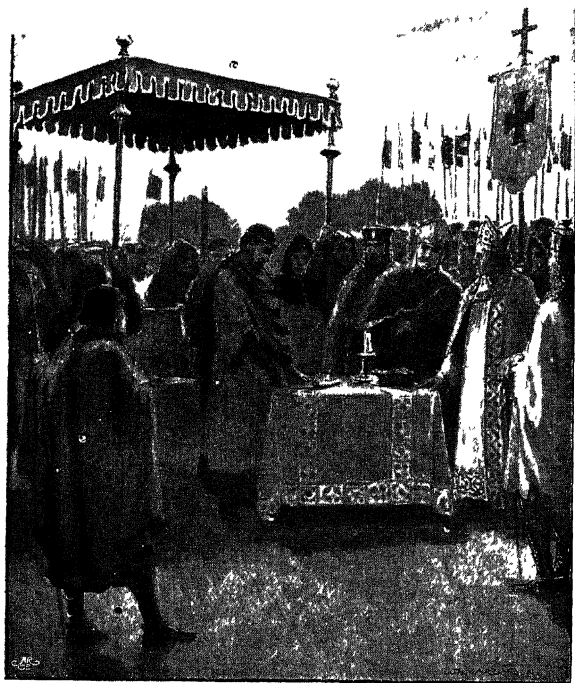
7. About him were grouped some of England's greatest men. There was Cardinal, Stephen Langton, Archbishop of Canterbury, a wise and learned man, who loved England well.

8. There were Robert Fitzwalter and William Marshal, great barons, who were ready to use their swords against the tyrant king. These men stood there while John unwillingly put his seal to the Charter drawn up by Langton.

9. How did this Great Charter make Englishmen free? Firstly, it settled what the rights of the people were, and showed that there were certain things which King John must not do. Secondly, it remained for future ages to refer to: whenever a king was inclined to act like a tyrant, there was the Great Charter for the people to appeal to. It was confirmed many times by succeeding kings; upon it other charters of liberty were based.

10. It laid down the rule that the king could not demand money from his people without the consent of the Council of the Realm. It declared that no freeman should be put in prison, or banished, or deprived of his goods until he had been judged by his equals according to the

law of the land. The labourer's tools, the mer-



John sets his Seal to the Great Charter

chant's goods, were as carefully guarded against the greed of the king as the wealth of the barons.

11. "To none will we sell or deny or delay right



or justice" are the famous words of the Charter. In short, it secured liberty and justice for all—high and low, rich and poor.

12 Let us now see what events led up to the signing of the Great Charter.

## 2. STEPHEN LANGTON.

1. John brought upon himself much trouble, and upon England much disgrace, by his own wilful folly.

2. The Archbishop of Canterbury having died, a new one had to be chosen. The right of choice lay with the monks of Canterbury.

3. Some of the monks chose one man; others, acting under orders from John, elected one of John's own favourites. An appeal was made to the Pope, who set aside both these men, and caused an English cardinal, named Stephen Langton, to be made archbishop instead.

4. Langton was a great and good man. He was a hard worker and a learned writer; it was he who first divided the books of the Bible into chapters as they are at the present time. Above all, he tried to persuade John to rule well, and he stood up manfully for the people whom John oppressed.

5. John was furious when he heard of what the

Pope had done. For six years the new archbishop dared not come to England, so terrible were John's threats. The monks of Canterbury were driven out of their monastery, and the church lands were seized by the king.

6 In order to force John to admit the archbishop and restore the monks, the Pope laid the country under an *Interdict*; that is, he ordered churches to be shut up, forbade services to be held, and would not even allow the burial service to be used

7. John did not care for this; the trouble fell only on the people. Then the Pope declared that the king was no longer a member of the Church, and that he must be shunned as an outcast.

8 The Pope also ordered Philip, King of France, to take John's kingdom from him. When John found that Philip was preparing to do so, and that his own lords were deserting him, he gave way.

9. He allowed Langton to come to England; he promised to give back to the Church the lands he had taken from it. He even gave his kingdom to the Pope, and did homage to him for it, he agreed to pay him a large yearly tribute. These were disgraceful things for any English king to do: the people were ashamed of their king.

10 Meanwhile the barons were growing more

and more weary of John's rule. Heavy taxes were laid upon them, and in many ways they were shamefully treated. The common people fared no better.

11. At length, at a council held in London, Stephen Langton brought out and read to the clergy and barons the Charter of Henry I, in which that king had promised to rule England according to English law. The barons solemnly swore to compel John, by force of arms, if needful, to rule according to this Charter.

12. Some time after, when John sent to ask what the barons wanted, Langton, as their spokesman, went to him, and read out the articles which afterwards became the Great Charter. Then John flew into a rage, and declared that he would never agree to them. "Why do they not demand my kingdom also?" he cried.

13. The barons at once took up arms under Robert Fitzwalter, and were gladly welcomed by the citizens of London.

14. Finding that his party was growing less and less, and the party of the barons stronger and stronger, the king at last gave way. At Runnymede, as we have seen, he signed the Great Charter of English freedom.

## 3. LAST DAYS OF KING JOHN.

1 After John had signed the Great Charter, some of the foreign captains whom he had hired to fight for him taunted him with being only a puppet king. John flew into a terrible rage. He flung himself on the ground, gnashing with his teeth; he gnawed bits of sticks and straw, and behaved like a madman.

2 Then, to show how little he cared for the Charter, he set about revenging himself on the barons. He got together an army of foreign soldiers, and the barons, fearing that they might be overcome, sought help from France.

3 Louis, the son of the French king, came over at once with an army. He landed in Kent, and, with the aid of the English barons, made himself master of several towns and castles.

4 The king, meanwhile, went about the country with his foreign army, destroying houses and castles, burning crops, plundering and slaying.

5. At length, he was one day fording the river Welland with his troops. The tide came up before the whole army had crossed, and washed away all the king's baggage, while many of his soldiers were drowned.

6. This caused such vexation to John that it made him ill. The same night at supper he ate



King John's Army overwhelmed by the tide

heartily of some peaches, and drank a quantity of new beer The result was a fever, of which he died.

7 The death of this bad king saved England from great troubles. The barons no longer needed the help of the French, and Louis had to return, though very unwillingly, to his own country.

8 The new king was John's son Henry, a boy nine years of age, and the people hoped that the great barons would teach the young king to rule wisely and justly.

## EARL SIMON OF MONTFORT.

### 1 GOVERNOR OF GASCONY

1. In the reign of John, a great churchman was the leader of those who stood up boldly against misrule. In the reign of John's son, Henry III, the lead was taken by a great baron.

2 Simon of Montfort was not by birth an Englishman. He was the son of a great French warrior lord, and was born about the year 1208. Brought up in the north of France, at the castle of Montfort from which he took his name, he came as a young man to England, and was kindly received by King Henry.

3 He was handsome, brave and skilful in war; indeed, he was reckoned the finest soldier of his day. When he married Henry's sister Eleanor, and by and by succeeded to the earldom of

Leicester, he became the most striking and important figure at the English court.

4. It was not very long before a quarrel arose between Simon and the king. Henry was a weak, foolish king: a far better man than his father, but of feeble will and fretful temper.

5. The exact cause of his quarrel with Simon is not known, but he made such charges against the earl that Simon felt himself obliged to leave England. He went on a crusade, but when he returned he overlooked Henry's unkindness, and fought well for him in some battles in France.

6 A few years later, Simon thought of going on another crusade, but other work was given him to do. Gascony, a province in the south of France, was the only one of all Henry II.'s French lands which now belonged to the English king.

7 There were constant troubles in the province. Many of the lords wished to have the King of France for their king instead of Henry. There was no peace in the country, and the state of the poorer people was very wretched.

8 Henry made Simon governor of Gascony, knowing that he was wise and brave and a skilful leader. Simon proved a stern and terrible governor. He destroyed castles belonging to the rebel lords, and put down the bands of robber knights who roamed over the country burning

and plundering; he took the part of the poor and weak against the rich and strong.

9 Several times he put down revolts, and spent immense sums of his own money in the service of the king. Henry showed himself very ungrateful. He listened to mean and spiteful stories about Simon, which said that the troubles in Gascony were caused by the governor's cruelty.

10 Simon demanded to be tried before his fellow lords, and at the trial he made a strong defence against the charges brought against him. He finished with the scornful cry: "Your testimony against me is worthless, for you are all liars and traitors!"

11. Simon's defence was so good, that the company of lords with one voice declared him innocent.

12. But the very next day the king picked a quarrel with the earl. Simon asked Henry to keep a promise he had made when appointing him governor of Gascony. Henry replied that he would keep no promise made to a traitor.

13. "That word is a lie!" Simon cried angrily, "and were you not my sovereign, an ill hour would it be for you in which you dared to utter it."

14. A few days later Henry said to him: "Go back to Gascony, thou lover and maker of strife!"



Simon quietly answered: "Gladly will I go; nor do I think to return till I have made thine enemies thy footstool, ungrateful though thou be".

## 2 THE PROVISIONS OF OXFORD.

1. One of Henry's worst faults was his fondness for foreigners. His court was filled with Frenchmen and Italians, who treated the English barons with pride and scorn. Henry spent large sums of money upon them, and most of this money had to be supplied by the English barons. They had to get the money from their tenants, and thus the whole nation suffered.

2 Another thing in which Henry displeased his people was his support of the Pope. Up to the reign of John, the Pope had been looked up to only as the head of the Church, but when John actually gave up his kingdom to him, he began to claim much more power in England than he had ever had before.

3 The clergy and the barons were obliged to give him much money. He made foreigners the ministers of English churches, and some of them never came to England at all, but enjoyed the wealth of their English offices at their foreign homes. This was unfair to the English clergy.

4. These and other things were so galling to



Earl Simon of Montfort and the Barons before Henry

the barons that they made up their minds to put a stop to them. A meeting of the Great Council, or Parliament as it now began to be called, took place at Oxford.

5 Here Henry was obliged to consent to the Provisions of Oxford, a plan of reform drawn up by Simon and his friends. The foreign favourites were to be sent away, and the king was only to act by the advice of a special council of fifteen. Thus the barons became masters of the country.

6. About this time, Henry was one day going in his barge up the Thames, when he was overtaken by a sudden thunderstorm. Fearing its violence, he ordered the boat to be run ashore, and took refuge in the house in which Simon then lived.

7. Simon welcomed the king, and told him not to fear, as the storm was well-nigh over. "I fear beyond measure the thunder and lightning," replied the king; "but I fear *you* more than all the thunder and lightning in the world."

8. "Fear your enemies, my lord king," was Simon's answer; "fear those who flatter you to your ruin, not me, your constant and faithful friend."

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## 4 3. SIMON AGAINST THE KING.

1. King Henry soon began to show that he would not tamely put up with being ruled by his barons. 'He was helped by quarrels among them. Simon was not trusted by them all, he was a foreigner himself, and had a hasty overbearing temper, and for these reasons he was disliked by some of the barons.

2. Henry soon broke his promise to observe the Provisions of Oxford. He brought back to England some of the foreigners who had been sent away, and showed that things would soon be as bad as they had been before.

3. There was nothing left for the barons to do but to take up arms. Simon was marked out as their natural leader. He was trusted by the people, who believed he was thinking more of the good of the nation than of any gain for himself.

4. Earl Simon acted promptly and with vigour. Foreigners were again sent out of the country, and Dover was captured; then Simon sent a letter to the citizens of London, asking for their support. They gave it gladly, and kept Henry almost a prisoner in the Tower of London.

5. The people were delighted at the thought of getting a better government, and loved Earl

Simon more than ever. A verse of a song of the time says—

Montfort is he rightly called,  
He is the *mount* and he is *bold*,<sup>1</sup>  
And has great chivalry,  
The truth I tell, my troth I plight,  
He hates the wrong, he loves the right,  
So shall have mastery

6 The earl marched to London, and the king once more agreed to the Provisions of Oxford, sent away his ministers, and gave their places to men chosen by the barons.

7. In order to have matters settled once for all, and peaceably, both the king and the barons agreed to ask the King of France to decide the dispute between them. His judgment was entirely in Henry's favour, but nothing else could have been expected, for one king would not be likely to say that the power of any other king, in his own country, should be lessened.

8 The question now before the barons was: Is England to be a free nation, or is she to be bound down by foreign favourites and foreign priests? It must be remembered that the best of the English clergy were on the side of the barons.

9 They did not reject outright the French

<sup>1</sup> In French, *Montfort* means "bold mount", *mont*=mount, *fort*=bold.

king's award; they took up one part of it, which said that England was to enjoy what rights she had before the Provisions of Oxford. They said that Henry had not observed the Great Charter, which secured these rights to the nation, and they were resolved to make him observe it

10. Earl Simon himself said: "Though all should leave me, I and my four sons will uphold the cause of justice, as I have sworn to do, for the honour of the Church and the good of the realm".

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#### 4 THE END OF SIMON

1. Civil war broke out. There was no peace in the land; everywhere there was killing, burning, and robbing. Peaceful towns and villages were filled with the horrid sounds of battle. Women and children trembled for the safety of their loved ones, and wept for the loss of those who were slain.

2. After several sieges and lesser fights, a great battle was fought near Lewes. It was won by Earl Simon after a hard fight, and King Henry and his son Edward were taken prisoner.

3. Simon was now ruler of the country. He at once set about putting the government in order. Power was to be in the hands of nine councillors, who were to consult a parliament

formed of the barons, the chief clergy, four knights from each county, and also, for the first time in English history, two citizens from each of certain towns.

4 This parliament met on January 30th, 1265. The fact that the towns sent members to it has led to Simon being called the founder of the House of Commons.

4. The parliament was not to make the laws as it does now; it was to see that the king and his ministers ruled in accordance with the law—which meant simply the old customs of the country.

6. Earl Simon's power did not last long. He was still distrusted by some of the nobles, and one of his strongest supporters left him. The king still had many friends who were working hard for him.

7 At length Prince Edward escaped, by a daring trick, from the captivity in which he had been kept since the battle of Lewes. A new horse had just been given to him, and he said that he wished to try its paces.

8. One day he went out with his attendants, and rode races with them till their horses were tired. Then he sprang upon a fresh horse, and galloped off. "Good day, my lords," he cried, "go tell my father I shall soon see him out of ward."

9. At once the king's supporters gathered round the prince, and Earl Simon saw that a



The Last Fight of Simon of Montfort

hard fight was before him. His own army was small, and he sent to his son Simon, bidding him come to his help at Hereford.

BROWN



10 The young man did not hurry, and when he reached his father's castle at Kenilworth, he foolishly allowed his troops to sleep in the village, instead of in the castle. They were surprised by Edward at early morning, many were captured, and all their arms and baggage fell into the hands of the king's soldiers.

11. Earl Simon, knowing nothing of his son's mishap, went towards Evesham to meet him. He soon learned to his sorrow that the forces seen advancing were those of Edward, and, watching them from a hill, he admired the way they came on. "It is from me that they have learned that order," he said. As he saw how much larger Edward's army was than his own, the brave earl knew that defeat and death were near. "Now let us commend our souls to God, for our bodies belong to our enemies"

12. Simon was urged to flee, but he refused. There was a desperate fight; the earl had a horse killed under him, but fought on foot, dealing hard blows with the sword which he wielded with both hands. At length a blow from behind struck him down, and he died murmuring "It is God's grace".

13 Simon of Montfort was a good and a great man. He was sober and simple in his life; his closest friends, bishop Robert Grosteste and friar

Adam Marsh, were the holiest men of their time; he was a lover of books, and of good conversation. Simon the Righteous, he was called by the people.

14. His faults were his pride, his fierce temper, and his love of gain, but there is no doubt that he had a real love for his adopted country, and worked hard to secure freedom for Englishmen.

15. After his death his cause triumphed, for King Henry left the government in the hands of his son Edward, who ruled very much in the way that Earl Simon would have wished.

## THE STORY OF EDWARD THE FIRST

### 1 EDWARD'S EARLY YEARS

1. All the kings who ruled England from the time of William the Conqueror to Henry III. were far more Norman than English. Their names were French; they spoke French; their lands in France took up a great deal of their attention.

2 Edward I. was the first king of England since the Conquest who bore an old English name. He was also the first who showed a real desire to understand Englishmen, and to make England, by aid of the English, a great power in Europe. The work he did, and the wisdom he

showed, make him one of the greatest of English sovereigns. 7

3 In character he was altogether unlike his grandfather, John, and his father, Henry. His will was strong, but he was not obstinate. He was a good son, a good husband, and a good father.

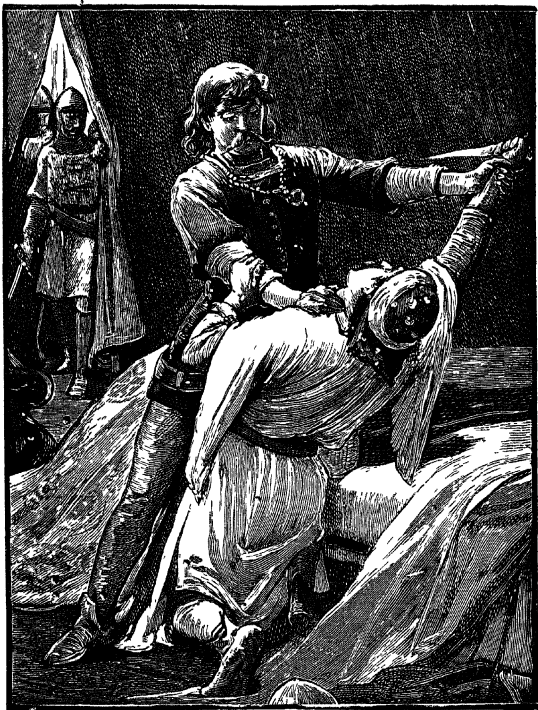
4. He lived purely and simply, and did not care for show or fine dress. "I should not be a better king," he said once, "however splendidly I was dressed." He loved truth and justice; his actions were upright; his motto was "Keep troth", and he was faithful to it.

5. His one great fault was a passionate temper, which sometimes blazed forth with terrible fury. On one occasion when Edward was thundering at a meeting of the clergy, the Dean of St. Paul's fell dead from fright. But Edward's wrath sank away as quickly as it rose.

6. Towards the end of Henry's reign, Edward went on a Crusade. He won one great victory over the Saracens at Nazareth, but did little else in Palestine.

7 One hot June evening, as Edward was sitting lightly clad upon his bed in his tent at Acre, a messenger came to him with an urgent message from one of the Saracen chiefs. This chief had said that he wished to become a

Christian, and Edward willingly received his messenger.



Prince Edward and the Saracen Assassin

8. The man entered the tent, and from his belt took a letter, which he gave to Edward. As the

prince was opening it, the man struck at his heart with a dagger. Edward warded off the blow with his arm; then, springing up, he felled the man to the earth, and killed him.

9. Edward's wound was dressed, but after a time the flesh around it showed signs of poisoning. The prince's attendants looked sad, and the doctors whispered together.

10. "What are you whispering about?" cried the prince; "can I not be cured? Speak out, and fear not." His English doctor replied: "You may be cured, Sire, but only at the price of great suffering".

11. Edward then bade the doctor do with him whatever he pleased. Edward's wife, Eleanor, whom he dearly loved, wished to stay with him, but the doctor ordered her away, and she was led out weeping. "It is better, lady," said the attendants, "that you should weep than the whole of England"

12. Then the doctor cut away the poisoned flesh, and in a few days Edward had quite recovered. At a later time a pretty story was told, that Eleanor herself sucked the poison from her husband's wound.

13. Edward was recalled to England by news of his father's serious illness. Before he reached home Henry was dead, and the prince became, at the age of thirty-three, King Edward I.

## 2. EDWARD CONQUERS WALES.

1. For many years there had been troubles between the English and their neighbours in Wales. The people of Wales were descendants of the ancient Britons. They would not submit either to the rule of the Saxons or the Normans.

2 They loved their freedom, and under their own princes they were constantly at war with the English kings.

3. The chief of the Welsh princes, Llewelyn, had helped Simon of Montfort, but on the defeat of Simon he had done homage to Henry III.

4. But when Edward became king, Llewelyn refused to do homage to him. An old prophecy of a British wizard, Merlin, had said that some day a Welsh prince should be crowned in London. Llewelyn, a brave and clever man, fancied that he was that prince, and that he would become a great British king.

5. Edward, who already in his youth had fought in Wales, led an army against the Welsh prince. He went with great caution, taking care that, as his army advanced, a fleet should sail along the coast, carrying food for the soldiers.

6. Llewelyn took refuge in the wild mountains of North Wales, but, in the winter, want of food compelled him to surrender.



7. Edward then made an attempt to rule the Welsh. But he did not understand them, and though he himself wished to be just, the officers

he appointed to act for him were harsh and cruel. \*

8. A new rising of the Welsh was the result. Edward led another army against them, and Llewelyn again took refuge in the Snowdon mountains.

9. But Llewelyn was soon killed, and his brother David, who had helped him, was captured and hanged. Edward then took Wales as a part of his kingdom.

10. He ruled it by English law, but he put several Welshmen in places of honour as his officers, and tried to keep some of the old Welsh customs. To make all secure, Edward set up a strong line of castles and fortified towns.

11. Sixteen years later, Edward created his eldest son the first Prince of Wales, and gave him the government of that country. The young prince was born in Wales, and had a Welsh nurse, so the Welsh people were fond of him, and looked upon him as one of themselves.

12. In later years, when the prince became King Edward II., and suffered cruel misfortunes, the Welsh people did their best to help him.

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## 3 EDWARD INVADES SCOTLAND. 6

1 Edward, having conquered Wales, wished to bring Scotland also under English rule. That country had up to this time been separate from England, and was ruled by kings of its own.

2 In Edward's time, it happened that the sovereign of Scotland was a little girl, daughter of the King of Norway, who had married a Scottish princess. The little queen was not yet four years old, and was known as the Maid of Norway.

3. Edward thought that it would be well if the two kingdoms were ruled by one sovereign; so he proposed that the Maid, when old enough, should become the wife of his son Edward. The Scots agreed to this, and King Edward sent to fetch the little girl from her home in Norway.

4 He sent with the ship plenty of the things that he thought the Maid might like, such as walnuts, figs, and gingerbread. But she was a delicate little thing, and the voyage across the rough North Sea was too much for her.

5 She became ill, and the ship put into the Orkney Islands. There the poor little queen died.

6 Her death was the cause of much trouble to Scotland. There was no near heir to the

throne, which was claimed by several nobles. Two of these, John Baliol and Robert Bruce, had a stronger claim than the others.

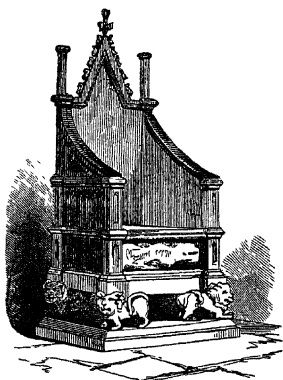
7 The Scots, fearing that civil war might break out, asked King Edward to decide which of these two had the better right to the crown

8 Edward accepted the task and decided for John Baliol, who promised to rule as his vassal, and at once did homage to him.

9 Afterwards, when Edward demanded that Baliol should appear at his court to answer for some action of his, the Scottish lords would not allow their king to obey. Edward at once sent an army to Scotland to punish Baliol for not obeying.

10. Edward captured Berwick, then the chief seaport of Scotland. One of his generals won a great victory at Dunbar, and in four months Baliol submitted and resigned the crown to Edward.

11. To show that he meant Scotland to be no



Coronation Chair, Westminster Abbey,  
containing the Stone from Scone.

longer a separate kingdom, Edward carried the Scottish crown and the royal jewels away to England. With them he took the stone upon which for ages past the kings of Scotland had been crowned, a stone which people said was the one on which Jacob had rested his head at Bethel.

12 That stone may now be seen in Westminster Abbey, beneath the seat of the chair in which all English sovereigns since that time have sat at their coronation.

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#### 4 SIR WILLIAM WALLACE.

1. Edward was not to rule Scotland in peace. He had promised, as in the case of Wales,<sup>6</sup> to rule justly, after the old Scottish customs, but his ministers were severe and unjust, and the Scots rose up against them.

2. Their leader was Sir William Wallace, whose life was one of strange adventure and daring deeds. He was a bitter enemy to the English, and his enmity arose, it is said, in the following way.

3. One day he was stopped in the streets of Lanark by some of the English soldiers. He was wearing a sword, which they said he had no right to do.

4 Words led to blows, and Wallace, who was a very tall and strong man, slew one of the soldiers after a brief struggle, and put the rest to flight. But he then had to flee, or the governor of the town would have put him to death for what he had done.

5 He escaped; but the governor, a man of cruel nature, broke into his house and killed his wife. This roused Wallace's heart to a deep and lasting hatred of the English. He gathered round him a host of devoted followers, and resolved to turn the English out of Scotland if he could.

6 After several small successes, he at last gained a great victory at Stirling, which forced the English to leave the country. The Scottish people then made Wallace governor of Scotland, and he tried by wise and just rule to bring back prosperity to the land.

7 During all this time Edward was in Flanders. When he returned, he resolved to regain Scotland at any cost. He gathered together an army of 80,000 men, and marched towards the north.

8 He took Edinburgh, but then serious troubles began. Wallace, who had only been able to get together a force of 20,000 men, was unwilling to meet Edward in the open field. So he retreated before him, laying waste the land as he went.

9 Edward's army soon began to suffer, as Wallace had destroyed all the crops and food supplies. Moreover, the ships that Edward expected from England with provisions did not arrive.

10 When he was in this plight, and had given orders to retreat, the news came that Wallace was encamped at Falkirk, and was going to follow close upon the retreating English and make a night attack upon them.

11 Edward rejoiced when he heard this. "As the Lord lives," he cried, "there will be no need for them to follow me, for on this very day I will march forward and meet them face to face." He advanced, and although, on the very morning of the battle, two of his ribs were broken by a kick from a horse, he led his army to the fight.

12. The battle was fierce and long. Again and again the mail-clad horsemen of England charged the Scottish spearmen. Again and again they were driven back. At times the whole Scottish army, quite surrounded by the masses of the attacking party, seemed lost.

13. But again the attack would grow less, and the Scottish spearmen, the front ranks kneeling, those behind standing, would be seen unbroken as before. At last Edward withdrew the cavalry and threw forward the archers—those English

archers who have decided so many a hard-fought fight.

14 Arrows fell like hail upon the Scottish ranks, and where never a horseman had been able to break through, the arrows cut wide gaps. A charge of cavalry completed the defeat, and Scotland seemed once more to be in Edward's power.

15 In the end Wallace was betrayed into the hands of Edward, who had him tortured without mercy, and put to death. This conduct is a great blot on the name of one of the greatest of our English kings.

#### 5 EDWARD LOSES SCOTLAND.

1. The Scots mourned the death of their hero, but they were not long left without a leader. Another great man arose to carry on the work of winning back Scottish freedom. This was Robert Bruce, grandson of the Bruce who had been the rival of Baliol.

2. Bruce, as a noble, had the help of the other nobles as well as of the people. Of Wallace the nobles had always been jealous, and they had given him very little support.

3. Edward was now old and infirm, but his mind was still set on mastering the Scots. Again

he marched northwards, though so feeble that he had to be carried on a litter.

4 At Carlisle he mounted his horse and led his army in person, but so weak was he that in four days he only managed to ride six miles. At the village of Burgh-on-Sands he became very ill, and could go no farther.

5 As he lay dying, he left a message for his son Edward, who was in London. He begged him to go on with the war, and to carry his bones at the head of the army, so that, though dead, the great warrior might seem to lead his soldiers against the enemy.

6. Then he died, at the age of sixty-eight, an age which few men reached in those days. The great king was buried in Westminster Abbey, where we can read on his plain gray marble monument Latin words which mean, "This is Edward the First, the hammer of the Scots—keep troth".

7 Although the Scottish war did not come to an end during Edward's reign, this will be a good place to tell how Scotland at last won back her freedom.

8 Robert Bruce, having been crowned king, gradually took fort after fort and castle after castle, till Stirling was the only strong place in Scotland remaining in English hands.

9 Edward II., a weak-willed and foolish man, gave himself up to pleasure, and for a time paid no heed to his great father's last words. At last he set off to the relief of Stirling. The largest



At Bannockburn The Scots kneel in prayer before the Battle

and most splendid army that ever entered Scotland was got together, and at the little stream, the Bannockburn, near Stirling, it met the army of Bruce

10 Bruce, like Wallace, was a great general. But he was more fortunate than Wallace in having only an unskilled warrior to fight against, instead of the able and warlike Edward I.

11. Moreover he had a good body of cavalry in



his army, and did not depend entirely on his foot-soldiers. When the English archers came into action, Bruce charged them with his horse, and scattered them to the winds. He thus avoided the fate that befell Wallace's army at Falkirk

12 By skilful generalship he completely overthrew the English host. From that time until his death Bruce ruled Scotland wisely and well, and kept his country free from the power of England.

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#### 6 EDWARD'S WORK FOR ENGLAND

1 The lessons which Edward I. had learned during the last years of his father's reign helped him to rule wisely when he himself became king.

2 Great as he was as a warrior, he was just as great as a lawgiver. He made many changes for the better in the way of carrying out the law, and so made it easier for people to have justice done to them.

3 Edward started the tax known as the *Customs*. Needing much money to pay the expenses of his government, he laid a tax on every sack of wool sent out of England. This he did with the consent of Parliament. The troubles of his father's reign had shown him that the king would be most truly powerful if he trusted the people, and took them into his confidence.

4 It is to Edward, then, that we owe our present form of government. He called together many parliaments during the first twenty years of his reign, and at length, in 1295, he summoned a parliament in which all the different classes of the people—the clergy, the nobility, and the commons — had someone to speak for them. This is sometimes known as the Model Parliament.

5 The barons came in person, the clergy sent their bishops and other chief men; the people sent two knights from each county, two citizens from each city, and two men from each borough.

6 Thus Edward took care that every one who had to obey the laws should have a voice in making them, and so he did much to help Englishmen to be free.

## THE HUNDRED YEARS' WAR.

### 1. THE BEGINNING OF THE WAR

1. After the death of Robert Bruce, when Edward III was king of England, war again broke out between Scotland and England, and the Scots sought help from France to keep the English out of their country.

2 It was partly this help given by France to Scotland which led to that war between France

and England which lasted for more than one hundred years. Fighting did not go on all that time, but it was a hundred years before England at last gave up the attempt to conquer France.

3 Other causes of the war were—the attempts made by the French king to take from Edward III. a French province which belonged to the English king; and the damage which French sailors did to English ships. The port of Southampton was burned by the French, and much injury was done to English trade.

4 So Edward declared war against France. He obtained the help of the Flemings, the people of Flanders, a country on the north east border of France.

5 But in order to get their help Edward had to make a claim to the throne of France. For the Flemings said that they were the vassals of whoever was king of France, and they wanted an excuse for fighting against Philip, their true king.

6 Edward's mother was a French princess, and Edward himself was the nearest male relative of the late French king; but he had no real right to the throne.

7 The war began with a sea-fight. Edward, learning that a large French fleet lay in the harbour of Sluys, on the coast of Flanders, made up his mind to attack it, though he was warned

how dangerous such an undertaking was. When his advisers begged him not to go, he grew angry,



and cried: "I shall go; those who are afraid where there is no cause for fear may stay at home!" He got together a fleet of 200 ships, and set sail.

In those days there were no cannon, and the ships did not fight at a distance with powder and shot.

9 First the archers let fly a volley of arrows; then the ships were driven one against another, and the English men-at-arms leaped on board the ships of the enemy, and fought hand to hand with pike and sword.

10. At the battle of Sluys the English were completely victorious. They lost only two ships, while nearly all the French ships were destroyed or injured, and thousands upon thousands of French and Norman sailors and soldiers were slain or drowned.

11 No one dared at first tell the French king of the disaster. At length the court jester called out, "What cowards those English are!" Philip asked why. "Because," said the jester, "they did not dare to leap into the sea as our brave Frenchmen did!" Then Philip guessed, from the jester's mockery, what had really happened.

## 2 THE BATTLE OF CRECY

1 For several years after the battle of Sluys, the war went on slowly and with no success. Then Edward crossed to France with a large army, determined to punish the men of Normandy and of Calais for their raids on the English coast.

2 With him he took his eldest son, also named Edward, who was at this time a lad of sixteen

years of age. He grew up to be so mighty and terrible a warrior that the French called him the Black Prince.

3. The French were very backward to defend their country, and for some months Edward went through Normandy ravaging and burning. At length he reached Rouen, where he wished to cross the river Seine on his way to Calais

4. There he found the bridges broken down, so that his position was very dangerous. The French king was at hand with an army twice the size of his own; to retreat was impossible, to advance was full of danger

5. At length Edward repaired one of the bridges, and crossed, only to find before him another river, the Somme. Over this, too, the bridges were destroyed, all but one, which was in the hands of the enemy..

6. He learned at last of a spot where the river could be crossed at low tide. Hastily he led his army over, and had only just got across when the French army arrived at the bank the English had left. By this time the tide had risen, and the baffled French could not cross to pursue their enemy.

7. Edward now determined to risk a battle. He drew up his army on a slope near the village of Crecy, where he waited while the French

crossed by the bridge many miles further up the river.

8. He arranged his army in three portions, remaining himself in the rear with one part as a reserve. One of the other divisions was commanded by the Black Prince, who was aided by Sir John of Chandos, one of the finest soldiers of the time.

9 Two days passed before the French army arrived. The battle began on the evening of August 26, 1346. The French soldiers, weary and hungry after a long march, were impatient and disorderly, for they expected to win an easy victory over the small English army.

10 The English had had good food and a long rest, and were seated on the ground, rank by rank, awaiting the enemy.

11 When King Philip saw them his blood boiled, so much he hated them. He ordered his crossbowmen to advance, and the English sprang up to meet them.

12 Just at that moment a terrible thunderstorm broke over the field. The rain fell in torrents, and so drenched the strings of the Frenchmen's bows that they became almost useless. But the English archers kept their bows in canvas cases, so that they were dry and in good trim.

13 Then the storm ceased as suddenly as it



King Edward watching the Battle of Crecy



arose, and the sun shone out, right in the faces of the dazzled French. With a shout the French bowmen advanced, but when they were met by a shower of English arrows as thick as snow, they threw down their bows and took to their heels.

14. In vain the men-at-arms tried to drive them back to the fight. They could not face again those terrible arrows, which still flew thick and fast. But the French knights behind kept pressing on, trusting to their greater numbers to break through the ranks of English archers and footmen.

15 Then it was that a knight went in haste to King Edward, who was watching the fight from a windmill on the hill, and begged him to come to the aid of his gallant son.

16 "Is my son dead?" asked the king. "No, Sire," replied the knight. "Is he unhorsed, or so desperately wounded that he cannot support himself?" "No, Sire," replied the knight, "but he is in so hot a strife that he has great need of your help." Then said the king: "Let the boy win his spurs, for I am resolved that all the glory of this day shall be his."

17 The boy won his spurs indeed. So well did he and his men fight that the French fled, after many of their bravest knights were slain. The battle ended in a complete victory for the English.

They lost few men, while the French loss was enormous.

18 The battle of Crecy is very important in one respect. It showed that the bravest and boldest knights of France were powerless against the sturdy English yeomen, with their bows and arrows.

19 The men who had left their ploughs and their spades at Edward's call, put to rout the finest nobility of France. The people won the day, and not the nobles.

### 3 THE CITIZENS OF CALAIS.

1 After the battle of Crecy, Edward hastened northwards and began the siege of Calais. In those days towns were strongly defended with thick walls, above which rose castles and turrets at various points. Cannon were not yet in use, and it was almost impossible to capture a town by assault.

2 The plan of a siege was to surround the town, and keep the people shut up without any chance of getting food.

3 This was done at Calais. For a whole year the English remained before the walls, living in huts which their carpenters had built, and which made a little town of themselves.

4 The sufferings of the people of Calais were terrible. They made their food last as long as possible, and when it was gone they began to eat their horses, dogs, and cats, and even began to speak of eating one another.

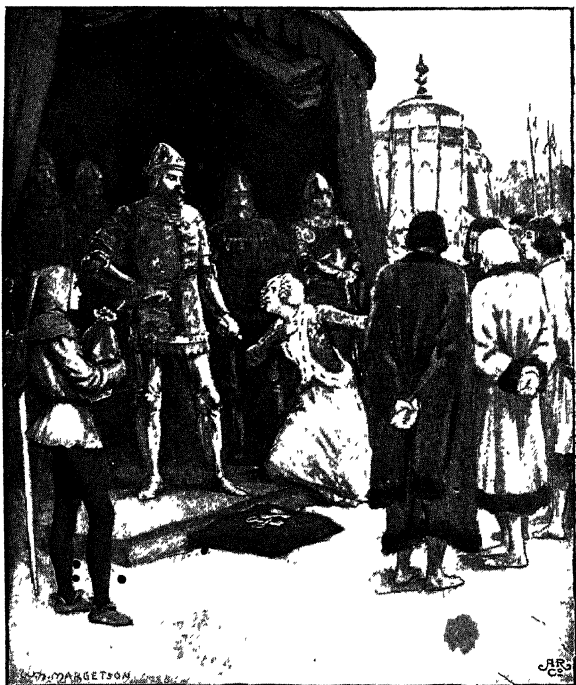
5 They hoped to hold out till an army came to relieve them, but though a French army came quite near, the soldiers so feared the English that they went away again without fighting.

6 At last the governor of the town offered to surrender, if Edward would allow the people to depart unharmed. A brave English knight, Sir Walter Manny, asked Edward to agree to this, but the king refused.

7 However, he consented to spare the citizens, if they gave up to him six of the chief men among them. These were to come to him bare-headed and barefooted, with ropes about their necks, bringing the keys of the city. "On them," said the king in his anger, "I will work my will!"

8 The poor, starving people were sad when they heard these hard terms. They met in the market-place at the ringing of a bell. There the richest man in the town stepped forward and spoke. "My friends," he said, "it would be a pity for all our people to die of famine. Whoever dies for his people will find grace and pardon in

the sight of God. I will be the first, and willingly will I yield myself in nothing but my shirt, with



The Queen begs Edward to spare the Men of Calais.

my head bare and a halter round my neck, to the mercy of the King of England.”

9 Women threw themselves at his feet with tears, blessing him. Five other noble-minded men joined themselves with him, and all six went out of the city, and came to meet Edward.

10. The English king sat in state to receive them, his queen by his side, and many nobles around him. The six men fell humbly at his feet, and, offering him the keys, begged him to have mercy upon them, and spare their lives.

11 Barons and knights wept as they beheld the pitiful sight. Sir Walter Manny pleaded for the captives: "Let not the world have cause to speak ill of your cruelty," he said to the king.

12 But Edward looked at them darkly with angry eyes. He could not forget what injuries the men of Calais had done to English seamen. Then Queen Philippa fell on her knees before the king, and said with tears: "My gentle Sir, since I crossed the seas with great danger to see you, not one favour have I asked of you; now I humbly beg that for love of Christ and of me you will have mercy on these men."

13 For a time Edward looked at her in silence. Then, raising her tenderly, he said: "My Lady, I could wish that you had not been here, but I cannot refuse you, I give them to you to do with as you please." Then the queen took the men of Calais to her tent, where she had them fed and

clothed, and sent them away with a present of money.

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#### 4 POICTIERS AND AGINCOURT.

1 The war lingered on for several years. Ten years after the battle of Crecy, the Black Prince won a splendid victory at Poitiers, where he captured the King of France, who was carried a prisoner to London.

2 After the battle of Poitiers, the English won no great successes in France for many years. The Black Prince wore himself out with constant warfare, and died before his father.

3. He proved himself to be a great, though a merciless soldier, and Englishmen were proud of him; but they liked him still better in his last years, when, though ill and weak, he did his best to improve the government of the country.

4 About sixty years after the battle of Poitiers, another wonderful victory was won by the English in France. The English king, Henry V., was a young man twenty-eight years old. He was warlike in character, and longed to conquer France. So he raised again the claim to the French crown which Edward III. had made.

5 In his younger days, when Prince of Wales, Henry is said to have been a merry madcap, and to have behaved in ways unworthy of a prince.

Stories are told of him robbing travellers and playing other pranks with a crew of idle rogues.

6 One of these stories is somewhat to his credit. A comrade of his was brought one day before the chief-justice, charged with an offence against the law

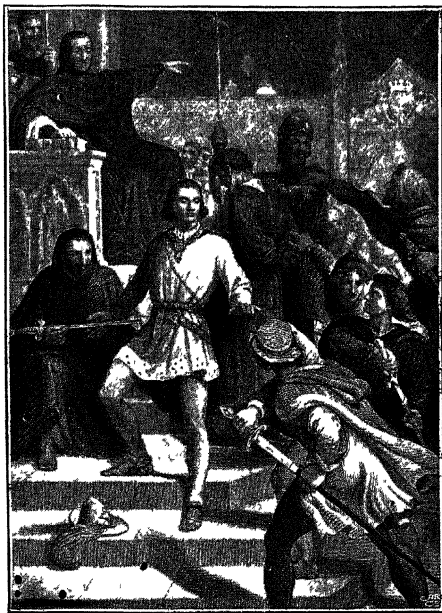
7. The prince, hearing of this, came to the court in a rage, and ordered the prisoner to be released. The judge refused to release him, whereupon the prince came angrily up to the judge's seat, and the onlookers in terror expected to see him kill the judge.

8 But the judge, looking calmly at the hot-headed youth, rebuked him for setting a bad example to his father's subjects, and ordered him to prison. The prince's attendants would have fought the officers of the law; but the prince, seeing how wrong he had been, forbade them to lift a hand for him, and went humbly to his punishment. His father, when he heard the story, said how glad he was to find he had so just a judge and so obedient a son.

9 Henry proved to be a splendid soldier. At Agincourt, a village a few miles north of Crecy, he defeated, with ten thousand men, a French army five times as large.

10 The English were hungry and tired, but eager for the fight. The French hesitated to

make an attack, whereupon Henry ordered his archers to advance. They obeyed with a shout,



Prince Henry and the Chief-justice.

and, planting in the ground before them a row of thick stakes sharpened at both ends, they shot their arrows into the ranks of the French horsemen.

11. The French charged, but their horses' legs



stuck fast in the mud, the ground being a ploughed field soaked with rain. Those who got free could not pass the close hedge of stakes, and many hundreds were slain.

12 Charge after charge failed, and the victory remained with Henry. Many of the greatest nobles of France were among the slain; eleven thousand French lay dead on the field, but on the English side only a few men fell.

13 After the battle, it was arranged that Henry should become King of France on the death of the king then reigning, but only seven years later Henry died, without having been able to call France his own kingdom, as he had wished to do.

#### 5 JOAN OF ARC.—I.

1 At Henry's death, the chief part in the French war was taken by his brother, the Duke of Bedford. Bedford was a most skilful warrior, and a wise statesman, who, within fifteen years of the battle of Agincourt, had made himself master of almost the whole of the north of France. One great town alone, the town of Orleans, remained to the French. If that were captured, Bedford believed that he would be able once for all to conquer the kingdom of France.

2. So he laid siege to Orleans, and kept the town shut up for many months. The French made a stout defence against his attacks, but could not drive him away.

3 All the attempts of the French to relieve Orleans having failed, it seemed as though the town must give in. At this serious moment a saviour appeared for Orleans, almost as by a miracle. It was a young girl of seventeen, whose memory is to this day loved by the French as that of a saint and martyr.

4. Her name was Joan of Arc, and she is sometimes called the Maid of Orleans. Her father was only a poor peasant, and the little girl grew up in a quiet country village, far away from the scenes of war.

5 She was very ignorant; she could neither read nor write; all her skill lay in sewing and spinning; but now and then she went to the field to tend her father's sheep.

6 She was gentle and good. Her mother had taught her to pray; she loved the sound of the evening bell calling her to prayer, she loved to sit and dream, and think over the stories of angels which she had been told.

7. As she grew older, stories of the horrors and miseries caused by war came to her village, and filled Joan's simple mind with sorrow. By and

by her own village began to suffer, and Joan's heart became more and more sad. She felt great pity for the realm of France.

8 Suddenly she began to hear, as she thought, voices in the air calling her, as the Voice called the boy Samuel of old. She paid little heed to them at first, but one day a voice said:—"Joan, you are called to live another life, and to do marvellous things, for it is you whom God has chosen to bring happiness to France, and to render aid to King Charles."

## 6 JOAN OF ARC—II

1 Distrusting the voice no longer, Joan went to a great captain to whom she told her story. He laughed at her, called her a foolish girl, and bade her go home to her parents.

2. Joan sadly returned, but she still heard the voices. By and by her village was burned and its church destroyed. Joan would wait no longer; again she went to the captain, who this time paid more attention to what she said, and at last agreed to send her to Charles.

3. Armed like a soldier and riding on a black horse, the young girl set out. She was tall and strongly built, with a pleasant face, beautiful black hair, and a sweet voice.

4. When she came before Charles, she begged him to give her an army, and allow her to go to Orleans. At first, Charles thought her requests



Joan at the head of her Troops

mere folly, fit only to be laughed at. But by and by his doubts were overcome by the maid's earnestness and purity of heart, and he gave her a suit of white armour and bade her go.

5 Clad in her armour, mounted on a white horse, and bearing a white banner embroidered

with lilies, Joan set out with an army for Orleans. The rough soldiers adored her, and for her sake they gave up some of their bad habits and lived more decent lives.

6. The English had heard of her, and were so overcome with terror when she appeared, that they allowed her to pass into Orleans with food for the starving people. They could not believe that any woman but a witch would dare to engage in such dangerous work, and they were not there to fight against witches.

7 In a few days the French had captured several of the English forts. The presence of the Maid gave them courage, while their bold enemies seemed to become as weak as women.

8. A few days more, and Orleans was saved. The English had so lost heart that they withdrew from the place. Then Joan went to Rheims, where the kings of France were crowned, and stood by the side of Charles at the altar, unfolding her lily-white banner as the crown was placed on his head.

9 Unhappily, Joan did not return to her country home; she remained with the soldiers, still leading and cheering them, until by and by she was taken prisoner by the troops of one of Charles's enemies, and handed over to the English.

10. Those were cruel times, when terrible deeds

were sometimes done in the name of religion. The English had Joan brought to trial, and accused of being a witch, and of acting as no Christian woman would act.

11 Such charges were monstrous and cruel, but her enemies were resolved to put out of the world the brave and good girl who had saved France. She was condemned, and on May 30th, 1431, in the market-place of Rouen, Joan was burned to death. Some even of her cruel English enemies shed tears as they watched her sufferings; and as she bent forward and murmured the name of Jesus ere she died, an Englishman standing by hung his head in shame. "We are lost!" he said, "we have burnt a saint!"

12. The English cause was indeed lost. The Duke of Bedford soon died, and there was no such able man to replace him. Twenty years after the death of Joan, England had lost all that she had won in France except Calais: that remained an English town for two hundred years.

## THE BLACK DEATH AND THE STATE OF ENGLAND.

### 1. THE BLACK DEATH.

1 During the early part of the Hundred Years' War, England was fairly prosperous. Edward III.  
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had encouraged trade; for his wars cost much money, and as the money had to be provided in part by taxes on the people, it could not be got unless trade was good.

2. He brought Flemish weavers to England, and tried to improve the English manufacture of wool. The trading classes during his reign grew much in wealth and importance.

3. The plunder gained in the war also helped to make England rich. The nobles, indeed, became wasteful, and spent large sums on their pleasures and their dress.

4. In the midst of all this, a dreadful plague came upon the country. It was a strange disease, which came from the east of Europe, and spread with awful speed. No one could check it. It was helped by the dirty habits of the people and the filthy state of their houses and towns; for in those days people did not know, as we now know, how important it is to be clean if we wish to be healthy.

5. This disease, known as the Black Death, carried off thousands upon thousands of the people, for the most part from among the poor. But though it was so terrible at the time, it brought great good to English workmen in after years.

6. So many poor labourers having died, it was

not easy to find men to till the fields. Those who were left demanded higher wages than some of the landlords could afford to pay, so that some landlords left their crops to perish rather than pay men to reap them.

7. Two years after the plague, Parliament passed a famous law on behalf of the landlords, by which an attempt was made to fix wages at a low rate, and in other ways to keep the labourers down.

8. At that time the country labourers were little better than slaves on the land of their lords. They were not allowed to go from place to place in search of higher wages; they had to put up with what they could get, and serve the masters on whose land they were born. If they tried to escape, and were captured, they were branded with a red-hot iron

9. When wages rose after the Black Death, the labourers who were not contented wished more than ever for freedom to go about in search of masters who would pay them better. But the masters would not allow them to do so, and began to treat them more harshly than ever.

10. Things got worse and worse, until, in the reign of Richard II., grandson of Edward III., a rebellion broke out.

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## 2 WAT TYLER'S REBELLION

1 The labourers, as we have seen, had many reasons for their discontent. Some of the wilder spirits among them now began to stir up their fury by asking why they were labourers at all.

2 A poor priest of Kent, named John Ball, went about the country telling the people that no man ought to be richer than any other man, and that all men were born equal.

3. A rough rhyme was made up—

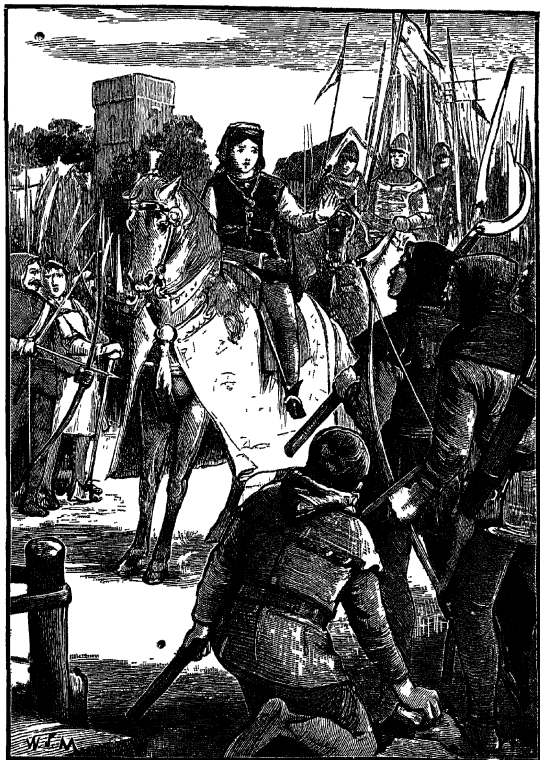
“When Adam delved and Eve span,  
Who was then the gentleman?”

This was sung all over the country, and the rougher spirits among the poor began to grow eager to get hold of the property of the rich and divide it among themselves. They were ready to break out in open violence at any moment.

4 Just at this dangerous time a new tax was put on the people. Every person over fifteen years of age was ordered to pay a certain sum towards the expenses of the French war.

5. The poor people raised loud and bitter complaints, but they did not at first refuse to pay, or rise in rebellion.

6 One day, one of the men sent to enquire whether the tax had been paid, behaved with shameful rudeness in the house of a workman



The boy King Richard rides up to Tyler's Men

at Dartford, in Kent. The man was so enraged that he struck the tax-collector dead.

7 His neighbours took his part, and very soon a great mob of rough men from Essex and Kent were on the march to London. On the way they broke into the houses of the gentry, and robbed and slew without mercy.

8 The king and his council were too much taken by surprise to put down the rising at once. They shut the gates of London, then a walled city, and asked what the rebels wanted. The rebels made answer that, first of all, they desired that no man should be held as a serf upon the land of his lord.

9 King Richard, then only a boy of fourteen, said that he would go out to the rebels, and try to quiet them. He met them at Smithfield, and began to talk to them; but their leader, a man named Wat Tyler, behaved so roughly that the Lord Mayor, thinking that the king would be hurt, struck Tyler down with a dagger, and he was killed as he lay on the ground.

10. The men of Kent, seeing their leader dead, bent their bows, and shouted that they would have revenge. But the young king galloped boldly up to them, promised to grant them what they asked for, and cried, "I myself will be your leader!"

11 Trusting in his promise, the people went away to their homes. The king's council after-

wards would not allow the promise to be kept, and the rebels were punished with much cruelty.

12 But from that time the labourers had more freedom, for the lords saw that it was impossible to keep down the poor people as they had done before. It was not very long before every serf had become a free man.

### 3. THE STATE OF ENGLAND

1 The life of Englishmen in the fourteenth century was very different from the life of the people to-day. There were, roughly, five classes in the country—the *clergy*, the *nobles*, the *traders*, the *yeomen*, and the *villains*.

2 The traders grew in importance during this period. The eastern counties were the seat of a great trade in wool and fish. Fairs were held in towns in various parts of the country, at which merchants of all nations sold their wares.

3 The yeomen were tenant-farmers, who in time of war served as bowmen and men-at-arms.

4 The villains, who, as we have seen, could not leave the lands on which they were born, but had to work there for their masters, lived in miserable huts, which had no windows or chimneys. Their food was good on the whole, though they

suffered for want of vegetables, the only one commonly eaten being cabbage. Meat, bread, butter and cheese were cheap.

5 The labourers wore rough clothes of wool or



Husbandman and Country Woman of Fifteenth Century

leather; the traders wore cloth of good material, but plain. The nobles decked themselves out in splendid clothing. Their dress consisted of a long-sleeved vest, with a large and costly mantle, and feathered hats. Their shoes were very long, and bent upwards at the toes,

being fastened to the knees with chains of gold and silver.

6 Though the houses of the poor were so bad, men were skilful in building grand churches, and fine houses for the wealthy. Splendid castles and manor houses were built. A manor house consisted of a large hall, where the family and servants had their meals, where the ladies worked at their sewing and spinning, and where the

servants slept at night, either on benches or on rushes placed on the floor.

7 At one end of the hall were sleeping-rooms for the family; at the other end were stables.



Court Costumes, time of Richard II

Some houses had large kitchens, and an upper chamber, or “solar”, built over the hall.

8 There was as a rule no chimney; the smoke found its way out through holes and gratings in the roof. Glass windows were seen nowhere but in palaces and churches. There was scarcely any furniture; a table and a few seats, with a dresser for holding the plate, were almost the only things in use.

9. People rose in the morning with the sun.

They had dinner as early as nine o'clock, and were called to it by a blast of the horn.

10. There were no forks or plates. People used their fingers, and cut their meat or fish on hunks of bread. After dinner, water was brought for washing, and minstrels played or sang while the company drank their wine or beer. Tea and coffee were as yet unknown.

11. Supper was eaten at five o'clock, and everybody went to bed at sunset, for candles were dear. Books were few, and were written by hand. Few people could read, but they used to listen to the stories told or sung by wandering story-tellers, who went about the country calling at the houses of the rich, where they were sure of a welcome, and of food and a lodging in return for their stories.

12. Life in England was hard for the poor, as it is in our days, but they had a good deal of pleasure too. Every saint's day was a holiday, and on these days, as well as on Sundays, people danced and made merry on their village green.

13. In the towns, the tradesmen joined together, in guilds, each trade having one of its own. Every man who followed a trade had to belong to the trade guild, otherwise he perhaps would not have been allowed to work, or would have found it hard to make a living. In the city of

London these guilds remain to this day, though they have no longer the power they once had.

14 We have seen that the Norman Conquest brought the French language into England. For many years the upper classes in England spoke French and understood no English, while the lower class kept their English and understood no French.

15 But by the time of Edward III., English had overcome French, though many French words had come into the language. From this time onwards English was the language used in the courts of law and in the schools, and great books began to be written in English.

## THE WARS OF THE ROSES.

### 1 THE CAUSE OF THE WAR.

1. At Edward III.'s death the crown passed to his grandson, Richard II. Richard proved a weak, unwise, and unworthy king, and after a reign of twenty-two years, his cousin Henry Bolingbroke took the crown from him, and became King Henry IV.

2. It was during the reign of Bolingbroke's grandson, Henry VI., that the Wars of the Roses broke out.



3. The sixth Henry was a gentle, weak-minded man, who was quite unfit to rule, and who never had any real power. He was completely in the hands of favourite lords, who were really the rulers of the country.

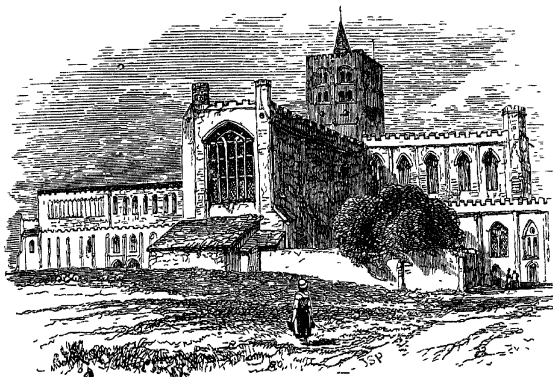
4. Henry VI. was king when Joan of Arc drove the English from Orleans, and when England began to lose her hold on France. The loss of the lands in France, won in so long and fierce a contest, caused great anger among the English people, and the misrule of the king's favourite, the Duke of Suffolk, added to their wrath and discontent.

5. At length the men of Kent rose in rebellion under a soldier named Jack Cade, demanding that the kingdom should be governed by the Duke of York. The duke was an able soldier and a clever man, and he bore a good character. He was also heir to the throne, for as yet Henry had no son.

6. Cade's rebellion was put down, but Henry was forced to give the Duke of York a greater share in governing the country than he had formerly possessed. When Henry soon afterwards went suddenly out of his mind, York was named by the lords protector of the kingdom.

7. The king recovered his senses as suddenly as he had lost them, and York had to give up

his position at the head of the kingdom. Henry at once brought back to power a former favourite, the Duke of Somerset; and York, knowing that



Abbey of St. Albans

Somerset was his enemy, and would put him to death if he could, took up arms

8. A battle was fought at St. Albans, in which Somerset was killed. This brought York again into power, and the king tried to make peace between the followers of York and those of Somerset.

9 But war broke out again, and now York made a claim to the throne. He was the descendant of the third son of Edward III., while Henry was descended from the fourth son,

the Earl of Lancaster. If Henry had died childless, York would have become king; but the birth of a prince, who was named Edward, had destroyed York's chance of becoming king in peace.

10. The lords would not allow his claim, but they arranged that at Henry's death the crown should pass to York and not to Prince Edward. This decision led to the great struggle between the Houses of Lancaster and York, known as the Wars of the Roses.

11. It is said that one day the leaders of the two parties in the struggle were walking in a garden. As they spoke hard words to one another, one of them plucked a white rose, and the other a red one, and these roses became the badges of their parties. The red rose was the badge of Lancaster, the white rose that of York.

## 2 THE EARL OF WARWICK.

1. King Henry's wife was Margaret of Anjou, a French princess of great bravery and cleverness, but of a hard and cruel temper. Englishmen hated her, for she was no true friend to England.

2. When the lords decided that York should succeed Henry, Margaret was furious, for she

wished, as was quite natural, that her son Edward should be king after his father.

3 She resolved to stand up for the rights of her son. She gathered together a great army from Scotland and the north of England, and a battle was fought at Wakefield, in Yorkshire, where the Duke of York was slain. Margaret had his head cut off, and set up on the walls of York, and upon the head was placed, in mockery, a crown of paper.

4. But the death of the Duke of York did not bring the war to an end, for his son Edward, a handsome young man of nineteen, stepped at once into his father's place as head of the Yorkists. He was aided by a great nobleman, the Earl of Warwick, who was afterwards known as the King-maker, for a reason that will be seen presently.

5 Warwick was much beloved by Englishmen, being kindly in manner, a good master to his servants, and a man who sought not so much his own greatness as the good of the realm.

6 Edward of York, with Warwick, hastened to London, where the citizens received him joyfully, and where the lords offered him the crown of England. In another battle at St. Albans Warwick was defeated, and Henry, whom

he had kept as a prisoner, escaped to his own friends.

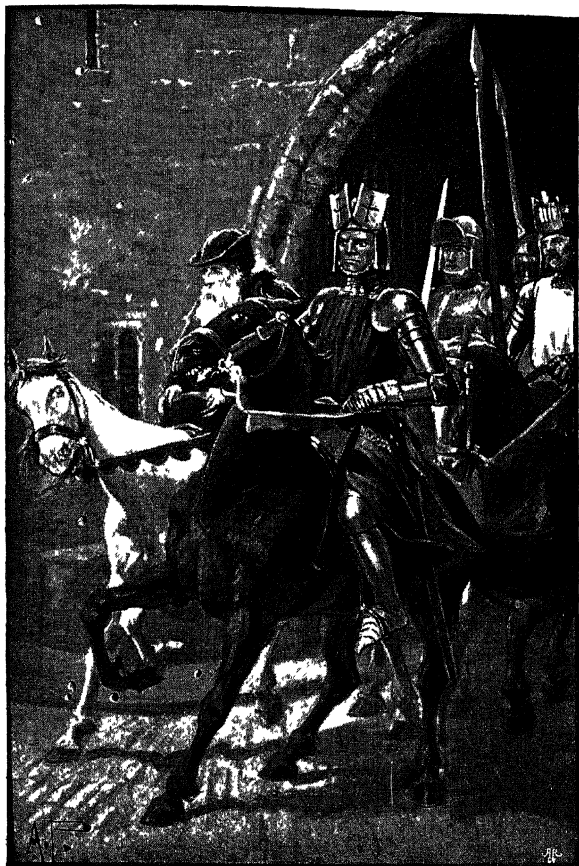
7. But at Towton Queen Margaret's army was utterly defeated, and 20,000 of her soldiers were slain.

8. Not long afterwards Henry was captured and imprisoned in the Tower of London, and Edward of York was, by aid of Warwick, crowned king as Edward IV. But he soon deeply offended many of his friends, and among them Warwick, towards whom he acted with great deceit.

9. The result was that Warwick after a time left Edward's party, and went over to the side of Henry. He even became friendly with Queen Margaret, who had before this been his bitterest enemy.

10. Warwick for a time had to remain out of the country, but he soon returned. He was so well received by the people that Edward, feeling unable to resist him, fled to Flanders, where his sister was the wife of the reigning duke.

11. Then Warwick went to the Tower, whither he had himself taken King Henry as a prisoner five years before, and brought the poor king out. Old, worn, and weary after his imprisonment, and dressed in very shabby and dirty clothes, Henry was led by the King-maker through the streets. Then Warwick had him dressed in robes



Warwick conducts Henry VI from the Tower

(M 174)

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fit for a king to wear, and restored him to the throne from which he had before removed him.

### 3 THE END OF THE WAR

1 In the very next year Edward returned to England with an army, entered London in triumph, and took the king prisoner. Then he marched out to meet Warwick, taking Henry with him.

2. At Barnet the armies of Lancaster and York met once more. Warwick, now the leader for the Red Rose, was killed in the battle, and his army was entirely defeated.

3. In the same year another battle was fought at Tewkesbury, where the White Rose was again successful. After this battle Prince Edward, Henry's son, now a youth eighteen years old, was brutally killed.

4. King Henry was again placed in the Tower, where he was murdered by King Edward's order.

5 Edward IV. reigned for the rest of his life in peace. At his death his son Edward, a boy twelve years of age, was crowned king, and Richard, Duke of Gloucester, was named Protector, until the young king was old enough to rule.

6. Gloucester was an able man, but his name is stained with deeds of blood which were thought horrible even in those cruel days. Pretending

that he wished to keep his nephew, the young king, out of harm's way, he placed him in the Tower of London, and soon afterwards gave him his younger brother as a companion.

7. Before many months had passed, the two boys were dead. No one knew how they died, but a story began to be whispered that their uncle had ordered their murder.

8. Gloucester then made himself king as Richard III. He only ruled his kingdom for two years. Then Henry, Earl of Richmond, the head of the House of Lancaster, came to England from the foreign town in which he had been living, and fought Richard in the battle of Bosworth Field.

9. Richard fought bravely, rushing into the thick of the fight, and wearing his crown, so that none could mistake him. Several times he tried to break through to where the Earl of Richmond was, to slay his enemy. At length, surrounded and overpowered, he died a soldier's death.

10. His crown, found in a holly-bush on the battle-field, was placed on the head of Richmond, who was hailed by the army as King Henry VII.

11. Thus ended the Wars of the Roses, with triumph for the House of Lancaster. It was a struggle between the great nobles, and the people at large took little interest in it.

12. Trade, reaping and sowing, went on almost



as usual, while the lords and their followers were fighting out the quarrel among themselves. Many of the lords were slain; many more were ruined, for when the Yorkists were in power, they condemned the lords of the opposite party as traitors; when the House of Lancaster was in power, the Yorkists were condemned. The lands of traitors passed to the king, and thus many lords of both parties lost all their lands.

13. As a result, Henry VII., and the sovereigns who ruled after him, had much wealth, and became more powerful than any king of England had yet been.

14. There were now no great lords to check the power of the king. Some of the later kings used their power unwisely, and it needed another war, in the reign of Charles I., to teach the lesson that the sovereign's duty is to seek the good of the nation, and not his own pleasure or gain.



The End of the King-maker

## SUMMARY.

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(N.B.—*The paragraphs in small type contain particulars supplementary to the Reading Lessons.*)

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### THE STORY OF ANCIENT BRITAIN

**1. The Landing of Cæsar.**—Fifty-five years before Christ was born some Roman soldiers crossed over from France to Britain. When they came near the coast they saw that the people were drawn up in arms on the shore, ready to fight for their country. They saw also that they themselves would have to wade for some distance before they could reach the land, a thing they did not like.

One of the standard-bearers leapt into the sea holding his standard above his head and calling on the men to follow him. They did so, and drove back the brave men who tried to hinder them from landing.

**2. Britain and the Britons.**—The leader of the men who landed on that August day in Kent was the famous general Julius Cæsar. In his wars with the people of the country we now call France, he had heard about Britain; besides, the people of Britain sent help to those with whom he was fighting.

So he came over to see the country for himself, and to punish the folk for helping his enemies. He tells us in his book about the tall, strong, long-haired, blue-eyed men with whom he fought. He shows how brave they were, and how terrible they looked in their war-paint, or dashing along in their war-chariots.

**3. Cæsar's Second Coming.**—The Britons asked for peace, but a storm having injured the fleet in which Cæsar had brought over his army, they attacked the Roman camp. They were again badly beaten; and Cæsar, having mended his ships, went back to Gaul.

Next year he came with a much larger army. He crossed the Thames and took the stronghold of the chief British king, Caswallon, and made the Britons beg for peace, and promise to pay a tribute to the Romans.

**4. Caradoc.**—About a hundred years after Cæsar's invasion, the Emperor Claudius sent his general to conquer Britain. The Britons fought bravely, but they were beaten time after time, and one of their chiefs, the brave Caradoc, was at last taken prisoner.

He and his family were taken to Rome. There, it is said, the emperor was so struck with his courage and his manly bearing that he pardoned him and his family.

**5. Boadicea.**—Boadicea, the wife of one of the British kings, having on his death been very cruelly treated by the Romans, rose in rebellion. She took and laid waste a number of Roman colonies, among them London, and killed thousands of Romans.

The Roman general, who had been forced to withdraw from London, took up a strong position in a fortified camp. Led by Boadicea, the Britons attacked the camp, but were utterly defeated; and the queen, fearing the vengeance of the Romans, poisoned herself.

**6. Britain under the Romans.**—The Romans held Britain for nearly four hundred years. During that time they built towns, made roads, drained parts of the country, and worked the mines of tin, lead, and copper. They encouraged the fisheries, and taught the Britons better ways of tilling the land and of making clothes.

During the Roman time some of the Britons learned to believe in Christ. Before that time they had been heathens, whose priests were called **Druids**.

## THE BEGINNING OF CHRISTIAN ENGLAND

**1. Britain becomes England.**—About four hundred years after the birth of Christ, the Romans withdrew their soldiers from Britain. They were needed to guard Rome itself against the wild tribes of the north and east.

The Britons were thus left at the mercy of the fierce tribes who attacked them. Though they begged most pitifully for help the Romans could not spare it. Then after a time the heathen Angles and Saxons landed in the south-east corner of the island. They made their home in the land, and called it **England**, after their home on the Continent. They either killed the Britons or made slaves of them.

## SUMMARY

Those who were not made slaves had to seek safety among the mountains of the west, in Wales and Cornwall, and became the forefathers of the Welsh and Cornish

**2. The English.**—These men, the real forefathers of the English of to-day, were a tall, strong, blue-eyed, fair-haired race of farmers and fishermen. They lived in townships or little villages. Each of these villages managed its own affairs and appointed its own rulers. The men were of two classes, **churls**, or common freemen and landholders, and **earls**, or nobles from whom the rulers were mostly taken

At the **town-moot**, or town-meeting, and the **shire-moot**, at both of which all freemen had a right to attend, all disputes were settled and public affairs decided. At first there were a number of separate kingdoms of the English, but in 827 A.D. **Egbert of Wessex** made himself ruler of the whole country

**3. The Coming of Augustine.**—At the end of the sixth century Pope Gregory the Great sent **Augustine** with forty monks to England to convert the people. It is said that when Gregory was young he was greatly struck by the beauty of some English slaves he saw in the market at Rome. Finding that the people were heathen he wished to go himself and preach to them, but the Pope would not let him.

Augustine and his monks were kindly received by **Ethelbert**, king of Kent, who allowed them to preach to the people and to build a church in Canterbury. In no very long time the king himself and all his people became Christians, as the king's French wife, **Bertha**, already was, and were baptized by Augustine

**4. Cædmon; the Old English Singer.**—Hilda, the grand-niece of **Edwin** of Northumbria, founded a home for monks and nuns at **Whitby** in Yorkshire. Among the servants of the monastery to whom she taught Bible stories was a middle-aged man, **Cædmon**. Cædmon used to be sorry, when he heard the other servants singing, that he was unable to do the same.

One evening he was guarding the beasts in the stables and thinking on this subject, when he fell asleep. He dreamed a wonderful dream. He told his dream in the morning to Mother Hilda, and repeated some of the song he thought he had sung. She saw that this new power was God's gift, and got Cædmon to become a monk and spend the rest of his life in turning Bible stories into verse.

## THE STORY OF ALFRED THE GREAT.

**1. Alfred the Boy.**—When Alfred was about seven he went with his father Ethelwolf to Rome, and was shown the wonders of that beautiful city. As they returned from Rome Ethelwolf married Judith, the young daughter of the French king.

We are told that Judith promised her stepsons to give a book, from which she was reading some stories to them, to whichever of them first learned to read it, and that Alfred, though he was the youngest, gained the prize.

**2. Alfred the Warrior.**—Three of Alfred's brothers, one after the other, became king of Wessex. The reign of the third of these, Ethelred, was almost entirely taken up in fighting against the Danes.

For more than fifty years these fierce heathen warriors had been attacking other parts of England. They were now trying to conquer Wessex. Alfred and his brother Ethelred beat them at Ashdown, near Reading; but shortly afterwards they were beaten by them at Merton, in Surrey. Ethelred was so badly wounded in this battle that after a short time he died, and Alfred was made king.

**3. Alfred in Misfortune.**—At Wilton, in Wiltshire, Alfred and the Danes fought so fierce a battle that they were glad to make peace, 871. In 876 the Danish army stole into Wessex, and took the castle of Wareham, and in 877 the town of Exeter.

In 878 they overran the country, and Alfred had for a time to seek shelter with a cow-herd among the swamps of Somerset. There by and by he got together a small company, and raised a fort at Athelney among the marshes.

**4. Alfred in Retirement.**—Left with only one small loaf, while his companions had gone abroad to hunt for food, we are told that Alfred ordered the cow-herd's wife to give half of it to a poor beggar. After this, the story goes that he fell asleep, and dreamt that an angel came and told him that he would soon win back his kingdom. As a sign of this he said that Alfred's companions would come back with a large supply of food.

He was also greatly cheered by the news that a nobleman of Devonshire had beaten a famous Danish leader, taken his magic banner, and killed twelve hundred of his men.

**5. Alfred conquers the Danes.**—Having visited the Danish camp in the disguise of a harper, Alfred ordered his men to meet him at Egbertstone, on the edge of Selwood Forest. He attacked the Danes at Edington and defeated them.

• He also took their stronghold; but he offered to let the Danish leader, Guthrum, if he became a Christian, rule over the eastern part of England, from Durham to Essex. He did so, and the agreement is known as the Treaty of Wedmore.

**6. Alfred the King.**—Alfred ruled his people wisely. He made just and good laws, and had them put in force. He invited learned men to his country to teach his people. Among these was a bishop named Asser, a Welshman, who taught Alfred Latin, and who also wrote a Life of Alfred.

When Alfred had learned to read Latin, he translated from Latin into English a great many books that he thought would be useful to his people. It is said also that in his reign the Saxon Chronicle was begun, the book from which we get nearly all our knowledge of the early history of our country.

**7. Alfred's Last Years.**—Alfred spent great pains on building ships. With these he was able to drive back or to pursue and punish the smaller bands of Danes who had troubled the English coasts.

For several years in the latter part of his life he was engaged in a fierce fight with another Danish invader, Hastings. But Alfred managed to drive him away. All the people sorrowed for Alfred's death. He left the throne to his son Edward, a young man of noble qualities.

## THE DANES IN ENGLAND

**1. The Danish Conquest.**—The Kings of Wessex, Alfred's son Edward and his grandson Athelstan, were brave and skilful warriors, and bit by bit made themselves masters of all England. The latter in 937 defeated a great army of Scots, Danes, and Welsh at Brunanburg.

On the murder of his brother Edward, Ethelred, known in history as the 'Unready' (that is, the man of ill-counsel), became king 978. The Danes again began their attacks on the shores of England. Ethelred at first gave them money to go away. Then as these invaders were helped by their kinsfolk in England, he planned the

cruel murder of all the Danes in his kingdom To avenge the murdered, among them his own sister, **Sweyn**, King of Denmark, invaded England, and forced Ethelred to flee to Normandy, 1013

**2. The Danish Kings.**—Sweyn died a few weeks after Ethelred had fled, and the latter came back promising to rule better. After a fierce struggle with Ethelred and his son, **Edmund Ironside**, whom he defeated at Ashdown, in Essex (1016), **Canute**, on the death of the latter, became King of all England

He governed well and justly, and was followed by his sons Harold and Hardicanute. On the death of Hardicanute in 1042, **Edward II.**, a son of Ethelred, became king

For many years during the reign of Edward the Confessor, the chief power in the country was held by **Godwin**, Earl of Wessex, father of Harold

## THE NORMAN CONQUEST

**1. Harold's Oath.**—Edward, who on account of his pious life was called the Confessor, had no children, and the nearest heir to the throne was a boy, **Edgar Atheling**

Both **William**, Duke of Normandy, a relation of Edward's, to whom he wished to leave the crown, and **Harold**, Earl of Wessex, the most powerful man in England, hoped to become king on Edward's death.

Harold, wrecked on the coast of Normandy, was forced to swear to help William to get the throne of England, and tricked into taking the oath on some holy relics

**2. The Battle of Hastings.**—When Edward died, the English Council of Wise Men chose Harold for their king William, charging Harold with having broken a solemn oath, gathered a great army to invade England, and Harold prepared to defend his kingdom.

Just then **Harold Hardrada**, King of Norway, and **Tostig**, Harold's brother, attacked the north of England Harold marched against them and defeated them at **Stamford Bridge**

While feasting after this victory, news was brought to him of the landing of Duke William in Sussex Harold hastened south, and with the men of the southern counties and his own body-guard, gave battle to William on the hill of **Senlac**, a few miles from **Hastings**. After a bravely fought battle, the English were beaten, and Harold their king killed, 1066

**3. Completion of the Conquest.**—William was crowned on Christmas-day, 1066. While he was in Normandy, rebellions broke out in various parts of the country in 1067. When William came back he put down the rising in Kent, and then took the city of Exeter, where he built a strong castle and left a large body of soldiers to keep the people down (1068).

In 1068 he marched northward, beat the northern earls Edwin and Morcar, and built a strong castle at York to keep the country in order. When he had gone south, the men of the north again rose in rebellion, and, helped by the Danes, took the castle of York, and killed the Norman soldiers (1069).

William took a fearful vengeance. He bribed the Danes to withdraw. Then falling on the English, he defeated them, captured York, and wasted with fire and sword the whole country between the Ouse and Tyne.

**4. Hereward.**—Hereward, a Lincolnshire noble, formed a fortified camp in the Isle of Ely, and there for some time bade defiance to William. He was joined by other bold Englishmen who wished to keep their freedom.

William tried to take the camp but could not reach it. He tried also to make a causeway through the swamp, but Hereward destroyed it as quickly as it could be made. At length he surrounded the camp, and, some monks having shown him a secret path, took it, and took a number of the English prisoners. Hereward got away safely, and kept up the war with William for some years. It is said he afterwards entered William's service.

**5. Results of the Conquest.**—(1) Strong castles were built by William to keep the English in order. That he might be able to call together at once the whole forces of the country, he set up the feudal system in England.

He also had an account drawn up, called **Domesday Book**, of all the holdings in the country, their size; how much was arable land, how much pasture, and how much forest; what number of pigs, cows, &c, were kept on it, and what was the name of the owner (*a*) when Edward was alive, and (*b*) when he was dead. He turned wide stretches of the country into forest for his amusement, paying no heed to the suffering he caused in this way to the people.

**6. Results of the Conquest.**—(2) By the Conquest many English freemen were made serfs. But the Conquest really did a



great deal of good, for it made England into a united country, it made Englishmen better acquainted with the art and learning of the rest of Europe, and it increased their trade with other countries.

It improved the mode of living and the manners of the English people. By the union of the two peoples a race better than either, was produced.

Though at first the Norman-French language drove English from use, save among the lower classes, in the end English was made better, and richer and smoother, by mixing with its own words and forms, words and forms of Norman-French.

## THE STORY OF HENRY THE SECOND

**1. Henry's Title and Character.**—First William and then Henry became king after the death of their father, William the Conqueror. When Henry died, the nobles and clergy made Stephen, his nephew, king, and a dreadful civil war broke out between him and Maud, Henry's daughter.

By an agreement made in 1153, Henry II, the son of Maud and of the Count of Anjou, became King of England when Stephen died in 1154. Henry was a very powerful king, and ruled over a great part of France as well as over England. He was besides one of the ablest and wisest and most active men of his time.

**2. Henry's Work for England.**—(1) Henry destroyed the castles of the robber nobles throughout England. He improved the coinage. He set himself, without any care about the discomfort to himself or his courtiers, to visit all parts of the country to right the wrongs of his people and to settle disputes.

**3. Henry's Work for England.**—(2) By sending his judges to hold their courts in all parts of the country, Henry greatly lessened the power of the nobles, and increased his own. Nearly all cases had before that time to be tried in the lower courts, where the noble was all-powerful. Now the king's justice was brought to every man's door.

Tried by the king's judges, the people were sure of getting a fair hearing. They were sure also that the court could enforce its judgments. So a form of trial by jury began to take the place of the old trial by ordeal, and with settled laws the country began to prosper.

**4. Thomas Becket.**—Thomas Becket, the son of a London merchant, was educated at London and Paris. After spending some time in the office of a kinsman, he entered the service of Theobald, Archbishop of Canterbury, about 1142.

He became a great favourite with Theobald, and rose rapidly. When Henry II. became king in 1154, on the advice of the archbishop he made Thomas chancellor of the kingdom.

He filled the office with great splendour, and was looked upon and treated by the king as his dearest friend.

**5. Becket quarrels with Henry.**—In 1162 Becket was made Archbishop of Canterbury. He at once changed his way of living. He became now so famous for his self-denial, his piety, and his charity, that he was looked on as a saint.

Henry wished that clergymen who were charged with crime should be tried by the common law-courts, instead of by the church courts. Becket at first objected to this change, but at last, advised by his friends and, it is said, by the Pope also, he agreed to it, much against his will. The rules drawn up for carrying out the king's plan were called the *Constitutions of Clarendon*.

**6. The Council of Northampton.**—Becket afterwards withdrew his submission, and the same year, 1164, a council was held at Northampton. Becket came before the council to answer certain charges.

He had already appealed to the Pope against being made to appear in the king's court. He now refused to withdraw his appeal, and finding the king bent on crushing him, he fled in the darkness of the night, and escaped to France.

**7. The End of Becket.**—To Becket, who lived for the next six years in France, the king gave new offence by having the Archbishop of York to crown his son. Becket said that only the Archbishop of Canterbury had the right to crown the king.

The King of France made peace between Henry and Becket, and Becket came back to England. He almost at once began to quarrel with the king's friends, and Henry was very angry.

Some of his knights, thinking to please him, went to Canterbury, and killed Becket. The people looked on Becket as a saint and martyr, and pilgrims flocked to his tomb. The king was severely punished for his share in the crime.

**8. Henry's Last Years.**—Dermot, king or chief of a part of Ireland, who had been driven from that country by the other chiefs, begged King Henry to help him. Henry gave him leave to get the help of any English knights who were willing to aid him.

Richard de Clare, known also as Strongbow, and some other knights went over to Ireland and put back Dermot on the throne. He died about a year after, and De Clare, who had married his daughter, claimed the throne.

Henry, fearing that a Norman kingdom would be set up in Ireland, went over to Ireland, and De Clare and the rest did homage to him. Henry then put down one rebellion of his sons, but they rebelled again and again; and at last Richard, his second son, with the help of the King of France, beat his father. The ingratitude of his children, especially of his favourite son John, broke the old king's heart, and he died (1189).

## THE CRUSADES AND RICHARD THE FIRST

**1. What the Crusades were.**—Moved by the eloquent preaching of Peter the Hermit, and led by the advice of Pope Urban and the opinion of the Council of Clermont, great bodies of people at the close of the eleventh century vowed to recover the Holy Land from the Turks.

They were no doubt moved to do so by the terrible tales, mostly too true, of the cruel treatment of Christian pilgrims by the Turks. There were in all nine of these wars called crusades, none of them being really successful.

**2. The Third Crusade.**—Richard I, a tall strong man, so brave that he was called Lion-heart, was the first English king who took part in these crusades. He gained great fame, took the town of Acre, and made his name a terror to the Turks. But he offended the other princes, they deserted him; and after coming within sight of Jerusalem he had to come back without taking it.

**3. Richard's Adventures and Death.**—Wrecked on the coast of Italy on his way back, Richard tried to travel across Europe in the dress of a pilgrim. The Duke of Austria, his bitter enemy, seized him near Vienna, and cast him into prison.

He afterwards sold him to the German emperor, who kept him

in prison till he was ransomed by the people of England and Normandy.

Having put down a rebellion of his brother John, Richard spent the rest of his reign in war with France. He quarrelled with one of his French vassals who refused to give up to him a treasure which he had found, and was killed while besieging his castle.

When Richard died John was made king, though an elder brother had left a son, Arthur, who was, according to our ideas, heir to the throne. John captured Arthur, and, it is said, murdered him. But his bad government so disgusted the people that the King of France was able to take Normandy from him in 1204. He ruled England and Ireland equally badly.

## KING JOHN AND THE GREAT CHARTER

**1. The Signing of the Charter.**—On the 15th of June, 1215, at Runnymede, near Windsor, King John was forced by his barons, who had taken up arms against him, to seal the Great Charter.

This charter stated that the king had no right to ask taxes from the barons, save through the common council. It also secured every freeman from imprisonment or loss of goods, except by the law of the land.

The kings who came after John were again and again made to confirm the charter. It made known the rights of the people, and guarded from unjust fines, not only the lands of the nobles, but the instruments with which the self tilled the land.

**2. Stephen Langton.**—John and the monks of Canterbury quarrelled about the choosing of an archbishop, and the Pope refused to accept either of the men chosen, and made Stephen Langton archbishop instead. John was very angry, and refused to let Langton land in England.

The Pope then placed the country under an interdict, and later excommunicated John, and bade the King of France drive him from his throne.

Then John gave in; but Langton was so sorry for the people, because John cruelly oppressed them, that he showed the barons at one of their meetings the charter Henry I granted when he became king.

The barons under Hubert Walter took up arms, and forced John to agree to their demands as contained in the Great Charter.

**3. Last Days of King John.**—Without paying any heed to the Great Charter John hired an army of foreign soldiers and attacked the barons. The barons asked help from the King of France, who sent over his son Lewis. John's hired soldiers deserted, and Lewis was getting the better of him, when he died.

John's son Henry, a boy of nine, became king in 1216, with the Earl of Pembroke as Regent. Pembroke was both a wise and able ruler. He won over the barons to the side of the young king, beat Lewis in the battle of Lincoln, and made him agree to leave the country.

## EARL SIMON OF MONTFORT.

**1. Governor of Gascony.**—Simon of Montfort, the son of a great French soldier, was born in France about the year 1208. He came to England in 1230, and became a favourite of Henry III., whose sister, Eleanor, he married in 1238.

In 1239, on account of a quarrel with the king, he left England and went on a crusade. Some time after his return the king made him Governor of Gascony.

This was a very troublesome post, because the nobles wished to be under the King of France, while the towns were loyal to the King of England. Simon did his duty, governed with great firmness, took the castles of the robber nobles, and made Henry really king of the country. Henry was not at all grateful to Simon, with whom he quarrelled again and again.

**2. The Provisions of Oxford.**—England was made very poor by the large sums of money which Henry spent on foreign favourites, and by the sums which the Pope, and the foreign clergymen whom he appointed to English churches, withdrew from the country.

A meeting of the Great Council was held, and Henry was forced to consent to the Provisions of Oxford, a plan of reform put forth by Earl Simon and his friends. These provisions required the king to dismiss the foreigners, and act only by the advice of a council of fifteen appointed by the barons.

**3. Simon against the King.**—The barons quarrelled among themselves, and the king, paying no heed to the Provisions of Oxford, brought back some of his foreign favourites. After some time spent in France Simon came back to England, and was made leader of the reforming party.

He forced the king to abide by the Provisions of Oxford in the meantime, while the King of France was asked to decide the dispute between the king and the barons. He decided in favour of Henry; but Earl Simon and his followers would not accept his decision, and civil war broke out.

**4. The End of Simon.**—Henry and his eldest son, Prince Edward, were taken prisoners at the battle of Lewes, 1264, and Simon appointed a council of nine to manage affairs. He also called to the parliament, which met in 1265, members for the towns as well as knights from the counties.

Prince Edward soon after this escaped, was joined by some of the powerful nobles; surprised Simon's son at Kenilworth; and defeated and killed Simon himself at the battle of Evesham, August 4, 1265.

Simon died fighting bravely. He was a great and good man, and notwithstanding his faults of temper, deserved the love the people gave him, and the name by which they spoke of him, **Sir Simon the Righteous**.

## THE STORY OF EDWARD THE FIRST

**1. Edward's Early Years.**—Edward, the first king since the Conquest with an English name, was brave, wise, true to his word, and a real lover of his people.

In 1270, to fulfil a vow he had made, he went on a crusade. He relieved the town of Acre, captured Nazareth, won some other victories, and was wounded by a murderer who tried to kill him. When his father died, 1272, he had to return to England.

**2. Edward Conquers Wales.**—When he came back to England, 1274, Edward found that Llewelyn, Prince of North Wales, refused to do homage to him, and to return the castles which he had taken. Edward forced him to yield, and imposed, very hard terms on him, 1277.

For some years there was peace, but in 1282 Llewelyn again rebelled. This time he was helped by his brother David. He gained some successes, but was surprised—some say betrayed—and killed in a skirmish in S. Wales; while his brother David was after some time taken a prisoner by Edward and put to death as a traitor. Wales was added to England, and a number of strong castles built to keep the people in subjection.

**3. Edward Invades Scotland.**—When Alexander III. of Scotland died in 1286 Edward tried to bring about the union of England and Scotland by marrying his son Edward to the young Queen of Scots, Margaret.

She died on her way to Britain in 1290, and a great many noble-men claimed the throne of Scotland. The Scots, fearing civil war, asked Edward to decide which of the claimants had the best right. He decided in favour of John Balliol, who promised to rule Scotland as his vassal.

Balliol, after some time, rebelled, and Edward marched into Scotland, took Berwick, defeated the Scottish army at Dunbar, captured the strong fortresses, and carried Balliol as a prisoner to England.

**4. Sir William Wallace.**—The people of Scotland almost at once rose against the rulers Edward put over them. They found a leader in Sir William Wallace, who is said to have taken up arms to avenge the murder of his young wife by the English governor of Lanark.

In 1297 he beat the English governor, the Earl of Surrey, at Stirling Bridge, and drove the English out of Scotland. Edward himself invaded Scotland at the head of a large army, and defeated Wallace at Falkirk in 1298.

Seven years later Wallace was captured, taken to London, and put to death as a traitor.

**5. Edward Loses Scotland.**—Early in 1306 Robert Bruce was crowned at Scone, and though defeated by the Earl of Pembroke at Methven Wood, he was able in 1307 to defeat that general at Loudon Hill. King Edward, who was marching against the Bruce, died at Burgh-on-Sands the same year.

On his death-bed he urged his son Edward, afterwards Edward II., to complete the conquest of Scotland. That weak king paid little heed to his father's dying words, and Bruce drove out the English and made himself master of all Scotland except Stirling Castle. Bruce was besieging Stirling when Edward at last came against him with a very large army, but was beaten at Bannockburn (1314).

**6. Edward's Work for England.**—Edward I. was a great law-maker as well as a great soldier. He not only made the laws better, but he made better arrangements for carrying them out, and gave the people more say in the making of them. The powers of

parliament became much greater during his reign, and members from the towns, as well as knights of the shire, began to form a regular part of the parliaments that were called.

Edward II's fondness for favourites led to quarrels between himself and his barons, and afterwards between him and the queen. The queen, helped by a powerful party among the barons and by the citizens of London, took the throne from her husband, whom she imprisoned. The crown was given to his son Edward III, and the wretched king was shortly afterwards murdered (1327).

Peace was made with Scotland in 1328, and the young king's sister, Joan, was married to David, son and heir of Robert Bruce.

## THE HUNDRED YEARS' WAR

**1. The Beginning of the War.**—By the treaty of Northampton in 1328 Edward III. gave up his claim to be overlord of Scotland. But on the death of Robert Bruce in 1329, he helped to the throne of Scotland Edward Balliol, who promised to hold it as his vassal. In the war with Scotland the French helped the Scots, tried to take from Edward the country in the south of France which belonged to him, and made attacks on English ships and on the south coast of England.

Edward claimed the throne of France, got the help of the Flemings and others; and though at first not successful in the war on land, gained in 1640 a great battle at Sluys, where he took or destroyed four-fifths of a great French fleet.

**2. The Battle of Crecy.**—In 1346 the English king landed in Normandy, took a number of towns on the south bank of the Seine, along which he marched to within a few miles of Paris. Then having repaired one of the bridges, he crossed the Seine and marched northward.

He found the bridges over the Somme, like those over the Seine, broken down, but forced his way across by a ford near the mouth of the river. He took up his ground at Crecy, and waited for the French king, who was coming against him with an army three times larger than his own. There he gained a complete victory.

**3. The Citizens of Calais.**—Edward laid siege to Calais, which held out for a whole year. So careful was the English king that though the French came against him with an immense army they were neither able to help the people of Calais nor to drive the English from their position.



Hunger forced the people of the city to surrender, but Edward would only spare the citizens if six of the chief men among them gave themselves up to be put to death. Six brave men were found who did so, and Edward was brought by his wife's prayers to spare them also.

**4. Poitiers and Agincourt.**—Ten years later, in 1356, the Black Prince at the head of about 10,000 men defeated a French army of more than 50,000 men at **Poitiers**, and took the French king prisoner. In 1376 the Black Prince died. His health had suffered greatly during the constant wars.

Edward III died in 1377, and his grandson Richard II, who was only eleven years old, became king. There was much confusion in the country. The king's uncles, the Dukes of Lancaster and Gloucester, were troublesome and ambitious men. Richard made himself really king in 1389, but having governed badly he was driven from the throne by his cousin Henry, the son of the Duke of Lancaster, 1399.

During the reign of Henry IV, Hotspur, the son of the Earl of Northumberland, rebelled, but was defeated at Shrewsbury.

In 1413, Henry IV died and was succeeded by Henry V, who, like his father, punished the Lollards severely. These were people who, following John Wyclif, wished for reforms in the faith and practice of the church.

About sixty years after the battle of Poitiers, Henry V, another English king who claimed the throne of France, won a great victory over the French at **Agincourt**. He forced them to give him the French king's daughter to wife and to promise him the French throne when the king died. Henry himself died in 1422, leaving for heir an infant son only nine months old.

**5. Joan of Arc.**—(1) John Duke of Bedford, the child king's uncle, ruled France for him. He was a very able man, and brought nearly all France under his nephew. At last he tried to capture **Orleans**, the only big town left to the French king, Charles. Charles was known as the **Dauphin**, the title of the eldest son of the French king, for by treaty Henry VI of England was king. At first all went in favour of the English, and it looked as if the people would be driven to yield. Then the "Maid of Orleans", **Joan of Arc**, relieved the place. She was a simple, pious village maiden, whose heart was pained and whose mind was excited by the stories of the sufferings brought on the people by the war.

**6. Joan of Arc.**—(2) Thinking that she heard a voice calling her to go and help Charles, she managed to convince a French officer of the district that she had a mission. He sent her to the **Dauphin**.

The Dauphin was satisfied that she spoke the truth, and gave her charge of a body of troops to relieve Orleans. This she did, and the English were so much afraid of her, as they thought her a witch, that they in a short time gave up the siege.

She took Charles to Rheims, and there he was crowned. He persuaded her to stay on and help him against the English. Some time afterwards she was taken prisoner and handed over to the English, who had her tried for witchcraft and burned in the market-place of Rouen, 1431.

## THE BLACK DEATH AND THE STATE OF ENGLAND.

**1. The Black Death.**—Edward tried to improve English trade by bringing over Flemish weavers and by other means. During the early part of his reign the country prospered and grew rapidly richer. In 1349 a terrible plague known as the **Black Death** attacked the people.

About half the inhabitants of England died. The wages of the labourers had to be increased. The parliament in 1351 tried to fix wages at a low rate and to prevent the labourers from going from place to place in search of work.

**2. Wat Tyler's Rebellion.**—Things grew worse. The poor became more discontented and began to ask why they alone should have to work and suffer. An attempt to make every person over fifteen pay a certain amount pressed very hardly on the poor. And the rudeness of one of the collectors in Kent led to a rebellion and to his own death.

The rebels, under **Wat Tyler** and other leaders, went to London. There, at a meeting with the young king, Tyler was killed by the Lord Mayor **Walworth**, and the king promised to grant the demands of the rebels, which included the freeing of the serfs. This promise, as well as the promise of pardon, was broken, and the poor people who had gone to their homes were severely punished.

**3. The State of England.**—In England during the fourteenth century the importance of the towns greatly increased. The merchants formed guilds or societies for protecting one another and for regulating their trade, and the craftsmen followed the example of the merchants.

The houses of the bulk of the people were very poor. But though

the poor then as now had many hardships to endure, the English peasant of the fourteenth century was much better off than his brethren on the Continent

People dressed according to their rank, and the dress of the nobles of the time was very splendid.

Only four years after the death of the Maid of Orleans the Duke of Bedford, the English governor, died. After this things went very badly. Bit by bit the French king retook the country from them. In 1449 Normandy was taken, and in 1450 the English were left with Calais only of all their conquests in France.

## THE WARS OF THE ROSES

**1. The Cause of the War.**—The country was very angry about the loss of the French dominions, and showed its discontent by a rebellion under **Jack Cade** in 1450. The rebels were put down; the Duke of York, whom the people trusted, was appointed to rule while Henry was mad.

When the king got better the Duke of York gave up his position; but fearing the king's favourite, the Duke of Somerset, he shortly afterwards took up arms. In a battle at St Albans, in 1455, the Duke of Somerset was defeated and killed and the king was taken prisoner.

The war thus begun is called the Wars of the Roses.

**2. The Earl of Warwick.**—When the parliament decided that the Duke of York should be king when Henry VI died, Margaret, Henry's wife, took up arms for her son Edward's claim. The duke was defeated and killed at **Wakefield** in Yorkshire, 1469. But though Margaret defeated the **Earl of Warwick** at **St. Albans** in 1461, the late duke's son, Edward, who won the battle of **Mortimer's Cross**, 1461, was welcomed by the people of London, and made king, while Henry was put off the throne.

He completely defeated Margaret's army at **Towton** a few weeks later. Having quarrelled with the Earl of Warwick in 1470, that powerful noble fled to France and joined Margaret.

He returned to England after a short time, and King Edward was forced to flee to Flanders, while King Henry, who had been a prisoner in the Tower, became king again for a short time.

**3. The End of the War.**—In 1471, Edward IV came back, defeated and killed the Earl of Warwick at **Barnet**, and Margaret's son Edward at **Tewkesbury**.



Map to illustrate the Wars of the Roses.

When Edward IV died in 1483 his brother Richard seized the throne and put his nephews, Edward IV's children, in the Tower.

They disappeared, and about two years afterwards Richard himself was defeated and killed at **Bosworth Field** by the Duke of Richmond, who became King Henry VII.

The 14th and 15th centuries were a time of very great importance in the history of England and of the world. The feudal system was gradually breaking up, and there grew up a large and ever-increasing body of freemen. Men began to think more deeply than before, and many wished for a purer and more simple religion. The coming of the Friars filled England with a body of earnest men who devoted their lives to preaching and to good works.

Men began to read more and to become better scholars. The great books, written by wise Greeks many hundreds of years before, became spread through Europe owing to the taking of Constantinople from the Greeks by the Turks. The Greeks fled, taking their books with them. Many of them settled as teachers in Italy and other parts of the west, thus the men of western Europe gained new ideas and were inspired to think new thoughts, and this had a great effect in making men wiser and broader-minded.

The invention of printing was the great means by which this movement was carried on among the people at large. Books became more common and much cheaper, and by means of them even poor men could get to know something of the best and most beautiful thoughts of great and noble minds.

## EXPLANATIONS OF THE MORE DIFFICULT WORDS, &c

*The Landing of Cæsar, pp. 7-9*

- 4 flocked, gathered in crowds  
island home, Britain, the  
island on which they lived
- 6 aloft, above his head.
- 8 hurling, throwing with all their  
might

*Britain and the Britons, pp. 9-12*

- 1 conquered, beat their foes
- 2 warriors, soldiers
- 6 savage, wild, ignorant, and rough  
in their ways of life.
- 7 furious, headlong, very great
- 8 ornaments, things worn to make  
the wearer look more beautiful,  
such as rings, bracelets

*Cæsar's Second Coming, pp. 12-14*

- 2. hopelessly, so badly that there  
was no hope of mending them
- 5 rampart, a mound or wall of earth  
built round a place as a defence.  
The rampart was usually formed of  
the earth dug out of the ditch
- 6 victors, winners of the fight
- 8 captured, took, made themselves  
masters of.  
tribute, a sum of money paid  
yearly by one nation to another  
as a sign of having been beaten

*Caradoc, pp. 14-17.*

- 2 well-trained, taught to act to-  
gether, and to use their weapons  
rightly

4 vast, great

horde, disorderly crowd

8 equal to = as good as.

with desperate courage, very  
fiercely, with whole soul and  
strength, without thought of  
death or danger

they suffered a terrible de-  
feat, they were badly beaten, and  
a very great number were killed.

- 10 triumph, a splendid procession  
in honour of a general who had  
gained a great victory. The Ro-  
man Senate (kind of parliament)  
marched in front, followed by the  
prisoners taken and the other  
spoils of battle. Then, in a  
chariot drawn by four horses,  
came the general, and after him  
on foot the army which had won  
the battle

*Boadicea, pp. 17-20.*

- 2 had arranged; had left things by  
his will in such a way
- 6 they were little expected; the  
Romans had no notion that they  
were going to rise against them
- 8 collected; gathered together  
array, ranks drawn up for  
battle
- 9 vengeance, punishment for the  
wrongs they had done to them,  
revenge
- 11 my body smarts, &c.; I still feel  
the sting or pain of the blows  
they gave me.
- 12 this is the mind of a woman;

this is how a woman has made up her mind

- 13 **javelin**, a light spear which was thrown from the hand.

*Britain under the Romans,*  
pp 20-23

- 1 **arts of peace**, the everyday affairs of life as opposed to the war-like affairs. The Romans taught the people more comfortable ways of living. The aim of the peaceful arts is to save life and make it more comfortable, as the aim of the "art of war" is to destroy life

- 3 **adorned**, made beautiful  
flourished, was carried on more, and with more success.

- 5 **encouraged the fisheries**, got more Britons to become fishermen by paying a good price for the fish.

- 8 **offered human sacrifices**, they killed men and women on the altars of their gods, thinking that this pleased them.

*Britain Becomes England,*  
pp. 23-24.

- 7 **settled**; made their home  
refuge, shelter from danger  
descendants, offspring, people sprung from them.

*The English, pp 24-26.*

- 6 **disputes, quarrels, disagreements**  
as to property, &c.

settled; brought to an end, made up.

*The Coming of Augustine, pp. 26-31*

- 2 **huddled**, pressed close together  
6 **convent**, a house for monks or nuns

monk, a man who, in order to be away from temptation, and to

have time for study and prayer, lives away from ordinary people in a house set apart for such men, and makes certain solemn vows as to his future way of life

- 7 **pagans**, worshippers of false gods. \*

- 13 **listened with attention**, heard carefully what he had to say, and thought over it.

*Cædmon, the Old English*  
*Singer, pp 31-34*

- 3 **nuns**, women who acted in the same way as monks.

- 4 **they shared all their goods in common**, they shared what they had with one another, no one had more than any other. They did in this way as the first disciples of Christ did after His death. "They were together and had all things in common."

- 7 **monastery**; a house for monks or nuns, is mostly used for a house for monks

- 14 **devote**, give up entirely.

- 15 **humble**, modest; meek.

*Alfred the Boy, pp 34-38.*

- 3 **splendour**, great display.

- 9 **shapely**, well-formed.  
splendid; striking and beautiful

*Alfred the Warrior, pp 38-40.*

- 9 **overpowered**, beaten in battle.

*Alfred in Misfortune, pp. 40-43.*

- 1 **Wilton**, small town near Salisbury.

- 7 **tend**, watch, look after.

*Alfred in Retirement, pp. 43-45*

- 1 to hunt for more; to search for animals to shoot or catch for food.

- 3 **in token**, as a sign \*

*Alfred Conquers the Danes,*  
*pp. 45-48*

- 2 disguise, dress meant to hide who he was
- 3 Alfred's memory was stored with; Alfred knew by heart, or could repeat a great many.
- mead, a drink made of honey and spices.
- 5 blare, rough shrill sound.
- 6 at closer quarters, the fighters were closer to one another.

*Alfred the King, pp. 48, 49*

- 2 for the protection of life and property, to keep people from killing and stealing.
- 5 translating Latin books into English, writing in English the exact meaning of what had been written in Latin

*Alfred's Last Years, pp. 50-52*

- 1 invented, contrived, planned and made
- 7 exactly measure time, show correctly what o'clock it was
- 11 true counsel, good and sincere advice
- wan, thin and pale.

*The Danish Kings, pp. 55-58.*

- 6 church festival, a day kept holy by the church in memory of some great event in their history
- 10 drunken revel, a noisy feast at which the people drank too much.

*Harold's Oath, pp. 58-62.*

- 5 aiming at the crown of England; each trying to make himself king of England
- 7 relics, parts of the body or of the clothes of saints or martyrs; sometimes things they used or things used in torturing them. Such things were thought very holy.

*The Battle of Hastings, pp. 62-64.*

- 2 a forced oath was not binding, a man did not need to keep an oath he had been made to take against his will
- 11 in pursuit, in chase of the Normans
- smote down the broken ranks of the English, killed the English who were in disorder.
- 12 wielded their deadly axes around their banner; stood round their banner and killed with their axes the enemy as they came up

*Completion of the Conquest,*  
*pp. 64-67*

- 2 rebellion; war against rulers.
- 6 finishing his conquest, making all England submit to him
- 9 bribed, induced them by payment.
- 11 ruined homesteads, dwelling-houses that had been burned down

*Hereward, pp. 67-70*

- 3 desperate men, men who would stick at nothing, who did not care what they did
- 5 causeway, a raised roadway.

*Results of the Conquest (1),*  
*pp. 70-73.*

- 10 had terrible results, very dreadful things happened because of it
- districts, stretches of country.
- for his sole pleasure, to amuse himself and his court and nobody else.

*Results of the Conquest (2),*  
*pp. 73-75*

- 3 rested on law, all his actions were made to fit in with the law of the land.



- 6 they brought with them improvements in all these things, they themselves did these things better, and they taught the English to do so also

art, music, sculpture, painting, and poetry

more polite and 'gentlemanly'; better bred—had better manners, more civil and respectful to others and more careful that others should be civil and respectful to them

- 7 brightness and charm, gaiety, light-heartedness and power to

solid strength, sound sense and trustworthiness

The meaning is that the mixed race, the offspring of English and Normans, has the good points of both races, the pleasing manner and the brightness of the Norman, and the good sense and thorough trustworthiness of the English.

*Henry's Title and Character,*  
pp 75-78

- 5 civil war; war between people of the same country.  
6 to bring them out of their distress, to free them from their troubles.  
7 domain, land under the rule of a lord

*Henry's Work for England (1),*  
pp. 78-81

- 2 entirely subject to them, completely in their power, thoroughly under them.  
5 disgusted, made them dislike very much his way of acting  
8 pack-horses, horses used for carrying burdens on their backs  
10 charters, legal documents granting certain rights, powers, or

privileges to a person or a number of persons.

*Henry's Work for England (2),*  
pp. 81-83.

- 6 assizes, the courts held by the judges at regular intervals in every county in England or Wales for the trial by jury of certain cases.  
8 stagnant water, water that lay still in pools or ponds, and at length became impure.  
9 the coinage became better, because the king's officers would not accept bad money. Formerly, the coins were often clipped, and thus became of less than their proper value

*Thomas Becket, pp. 83-86*

- 4 a keen mind, he was quick at understanding difficult things, and at planning difficult tasks.  
frank and winning conversation, open, kindly, and pleasing way of speaking  
5 chancellor, chief officer of the king; the one who looked after the law and money matters of the kingdom  
8 choicest, finest, most dainty.

*Becket Quarrels with Henry,*  
pp. 86-88

- 2 sackcloth; a coarse kind of cloth  
9 besought, earnestly begged.

*The Council of Northampton,*  
pp. 88-90

- 2 appealed to; asked the Pope to judge whether he should do so  
4 said mass, went through the principal service of the church

*The End of Becket, pp. 90-93.*

- 2 ensure, make certain  
adopted, taken, used

- 3 ceremony, the solemn service of which the crowning formed a part  
 5 upstart, one who has risen quickly to a high position from a humble one  
 • clerk, clergyman  
 7 mitre, a sort of cap worn by  
 13 martyr, one who suffers death for conscience' sake

*Henry's Last Years, pp 93-96.*

- 4 homage, see page 70, par. 4.  
 5 iron; firm and stern.  
 7 enjoyed rest, had any peace  
 9 hardly escaped defeat, was almost beaten.

*What the Crusades were, pp 96-99*

- 1 haggard; pale-faced and careworn.  
 2 crucifix; a small image of Christ on the cross.  
 12 serfs; men who had to work for the masters on whose land they were born they were practically slaves.  
 13 infidels, men who did not believe in Christ.

*The Third Crusade, pp. 100-101*

- 6 truce, agreement to stop the war for a time.

*Richard's Adventures and Death, pp 102-104.*

- 1 to finish his journey overland, to travel from Italy across Europe to Normandy  
 8 echoing, repeating after him.  
 11. vassal, one who holds lands under another, that other being called the lord

*The Signing of the Charter, pp. 105-108.*

- 7 cardinal, a high official of the Roman Catholic Church, next in

place to the Pope. From the cardinals the Pope is chosen

- 9 confirmed many times by succeeding kings, the kings who came after John again and again promised to abide by it.

based, founded, built upon as a foundation The other charters of liberties followed as a matter of course from Magna Charta.

- 10 banished, driven out of the country.  
 11 secured, made sure Freedom and justice were already the rights of Englishmen the Great Charter made them sure against the tyranny of bad kings

*Stephen Langton, pp. 108-110.*

- 4 oppressed, laid burdens on that were too heavy  
 7 shunned; avoided, people were to have nothing to do with him.  
 8 deserting, leaving  
 12 articles, statements; the separate parts of the charter.

*Last Days of King John, pp 111-113*

- 1 taunted; mocked, made game of.  
 a puppet king, a king without any real power; no more a real king than a dummy or doll.

*Governor of Gascony, pp 113-116.*

- 10 testimony; statement made in support of their charges  
 14 made thine enemies thy footstool, completely beaten and crushed them. The phrase is taken from the Bible

In olden days, a beaten enemy often used to put his head under his conqueror's foot, as a sign of his defeat.

*The Provisions of Oxford,*  
pp. 116-118

- 4 galling, vexing, annoying.
5. plan of reform, plan for altering things for the better
- 7 beyond measure; more than I can say

*Simon against the King,*  
pp. 119-121.

- 1 overbearing; always wanting his own way
- 4 with vigour, in a very active way
- 6 chivalry, bravery, and care for the poor and weak.

my troth I plight, I give you my word.

- 9 reject outright the French king's award, declare plainly that they would not abide by the judgment of the French king, as they had promised to do

*The End of Simon, pp. 121-125.*

- 7 captivity, imprisonment.  
to try its paces, see how quick and well it could go.
- 8 out of ward, free, out of prison.
- 13 friar, one of a number of religious men who lived in some ways like monks, but who mixed more with their fellowmen, teaching and preaching
- 15 cause, the object for which he was working.  
triumphed; was successful.

*Edward's Early Years, pp. 125-128.*

- 4 keep troth, keep your word  
Saracens, Arabs. The name given by Christians to all peoples who were not Christians, especially those against whom Crusades were preached.
- 10 Sire; sir; a title used in addressing kings.

*Edward Conquers Wales,*  
pp. 129-131.

wizard, one who was thought to have the power of seeing into the future, and of working charms.

*Edward Invades Scotland,*  
pp. 132-134.

- 10 resigned the crown, gave up his kingship; was a king no longer
- 12 coronation, the ceremony of crowning a new king or queen.

*Sir William Wallace, pp. 134-137.*

- 5 devoted followers, men who gave themselves up heart and soul to help Wallace.
- 6 prosperity, peace and plenty.
- 7 Flanders, country over the North Sea, now part of Belgium. It bordered on France.
- 10 plight, a sad or distressed state.

*Edward Loses Scotland,*  
pp. 137-140

- 3 infirm, weakly; feeble.
- 6 hammer, so called of course because he gave Scotland such hard blows.

*Edward's Work for England,*  
pp. 140-141

- 2 carrying out the law, putting it in force, making people obey it
- 3 took them into his confidence; let them know really what he thought and wished, and explained to them the reasons of his actions.
- 5 knights; men below the rank of lord, but above that of ordinary gentlemen. They write *Sir* before their name.

city; a town which is the seat of a bishop, or has a cathedral.

- 5 borough, town governed by its own officers

*The Beginning of the War,*  
pp. 141-144

- 10 were completely victorious; gave the French a thorough beating.

- 11 disaster, great and unexpected defeat.

jester; in olden times kings used to keep at court a man whose special business it was to be funny—to make people laugh

*The Battle of Crecy, pp. 144-149.*

- 1 raids; inroads, sudden attacks of armed men on places to plunder or injure them

- 2 Black Prince Some say that the name was given to him by the French on account of his terrible deeds. This use of the word 'black' is not at all uncommon. Compare "the throne usurped by the Queen's black enemy", a "black day" that is an unfortunate day, a "black burning shame", a very great shame; and the schoolboy's name for the first Monday after the holidays, "black Monday". Others say he was called the Black Prince from the colour of his armour

- 6 baffled, foiled; prevented from gaining their object

- 16 with his spurs, fight on, and show that he is worthy of the honour of knighthood. As a matter of fact, the boy was already made a knight, and therefore the story is probably only a legend. A knight had the right to wear golden spurs on his boots, hence to 'win one's spurs' means to 'become a knight'

18. yeomen, countrymen; farmers and small land-owners In those

days there was no special class of soldiers, but every man was trained to arms and might be called out to fight

*The Citizens of Calais, pp. 149-153*

- 1 assault, a sudden and strong attack.

- 5 to relieve them, furnish them with supplies, &c, or drive away the English

*Poictiers and Agincourt,*  
pp. 153-156

- 10 stakes, thick pieces of wood.

- 12 the victory remained with Henry, Henry won the battle.

*Joan of Arc (1), pp. 156-158.*

- 1 statesman, a man whose business it is to manage public affairs

- 7 horrors and miseries, the dreadful things that happened, and the wretchedness of the people.

realm, kingdom.

- 8 marvellous things; things to be wondered at.

*Joan of Arc (2), pp. 158-161*

- 5 adored; almost worshipped, they were so fond of her.

- 11 monstrous; horrible; not natural

*The Black Death, pp. 161-163.*

- 1 had encouraged trade, had done what he could to make trade better, by granting privileges to traders, &c

- 8 branded, burned with a red-hot iron so that the mark of the iron remained.

*Wat Tyler's Rebellion, pp. 164-167*

- 5 raised loud and bitter complaints; they said the tax was cruel and unjust.

*The State of England, pp. 167-171.*

5 decked themselves out, made themselves look smart

6 manor-house, house built on a manor, that is, land belonging to a nobleman or squire

13 guilds; societies of tradesmen or merchants, and of craftsmen, consisting of the members of the particular trade or craft. These societies sought to protect the members against the unlawful exactions of the lords, to regulate the trade or craft in the general interests of the members, and to enable the members to help each other.

15 great books; Chaucer's poems and Wychf's translations of the Bible, &c.

*The Cause of the War, pp. 171-174.*

3 in the hands of, ruled by

6 protector of the kingdom, ruler for the time.

*The Earl of Warwick, pp. 174-178.*

11 restored him to the throne; made him king again.

*The End of the War, pp. 178-180.*

10 hailed; greeted as, saluted or addressed as.

